DISSENT

AFTER VIETNAM

Joseph Clark

The Immorality of Error

Lionel Abel

On Imitating the Communists

Henry Pachter

The New Shape of Foreign Policy

Sanford Gottlieb

Curbing the Military-Industrial Complex

Irving Howe

What's the Trouble?

Social Crisis, Crisis of Civilisation, Both?

Andrew Greeley: The Irish, "A Most Distressful Nation" . . . *Michael Harrington:* Myths About the Paris Commune . . . *Lewis Coser:* What do the Poor Need? . . . *David Bromwich:* Documentary Now . . . *Erazim Kohák:* Russia: The Fire Next time?

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Short Subjects

Rock Festival As Rip-Off

AT THE LOUISIANA ROCK FESTIVAL this summer, everything went wrong. About 100,000 young people turned up, in search of music, companionship, fresh air, and other things. What they found was an ill-organized racket. Some of the promised big-name rock groups never turned up; the sanitary facilities were disgraceful; food was being peddled at outrageous prices; hard drugs were all over the place and two young people died from them.

For plunking down his $28, each of the customers got a large return in frustration, deceit, and misery. When the festival broke up, a group of young people rode off in anger, shouting it was all a "rip-off." They were right.

The entrepreneurs of this rip-off were themselves young. They had already learned their lesson in the ethos of screw-all-comers, quite as if they were robber barons ripe with age. They saw the commercial possibilities of exploiting the innocence of their generation, and no solidarity of age could stand in their way.

In the summer dust of Louisiana, where the locals gaped at dust-baked kids bathing nude and the sharpers tried to multiply a fast buck, Consciousness III took a fall, apparently no match for the great capitalist tradition of grab, cheat, and lie.

—L. M. □

A Grim Report From Prague

LE MONDE, *in its June 10–16 English edition, prints an inside report from Prague that gives a depressing picture of the gradual re-Stalinization of Czech culture. A few excerpts:*

> Czechoslovaks were most impressed by the protest against the dismissal of the producer Otomar Krejca (he founded the Za Branu Theatre in 1966). Never before, it seems, had so many signatures been collected to protest against a measure taken against someone in the world of theatre. We noticed that, for once, Communists—a few Communists—had signed with the others. It was rare, and heart-warming. Everyone was aware, of course, that the issue did not only involve Krejca alone; he had become a symbol. . . . Krejca was punished, we read, despite the fact that he had always wanted to remain in Prague with his actors. He was in fact punished precisely because he wanted to remain in the capital with them.
>
> *If he had agreed not to emigrate but to turn* into an "itinerant showpiece of socialist culture"—forbidden at home, but exhibited abroad to fill the state's coffers with foreign exchange—then a solution to his case might well have been worked out. But Krejca's own firm attitude, *his stubbornly reiterated intention of staying* in Prague led to the . . . repressive decision.
>
> For Krejca was setting a very bad example. The Czechoslovak leadership's present policy is to humiliate people and to force them to go back on what they have said or signed to deprive them of all moral authority in the future.
>
> One comes to understand how the absence of a cause to defend weakens morale and resistance within the country. In this respect, the situation was better during the years of the German "protectorate" between 1939 and 1945, for all wars have an end. Physical terror indeed was more savagely inflicted, but there was far less destruction of people's ethical and cultural values. . . . Most producers have been replaced by men whose lack of talent is, for the authorities, the best guarantee of absolute devotion. Preliminary censorship, a hollow hoax, has been abolished and the producer made responsible for any undesirable public reactions in the course of a performance. All controversial plays have been gradually withdrawn from the theatres' regular repertories.
>
> As if this were not enough, Bertolt Brecht's play *Mother Courage* suffered twenty-five important cuts because the audience attending the dress rehearsal—and it was a carefully selected audience—turned the show into a veritable political demonstration. But Brecht, once regarded as subversive in the U.S., was not the only victim.
>
> In Prague, the National Theatre's performance of *Don Juan*, Molière's subversive libertine, underwent extensive cuts; the dress rehearsal for Shakespeare's *Henry IV* unexpectedly aroused such a demonstration that government representatives attending the performance left the theatre when the curtain fell for the interval. The play was not performed again.
>
> Russian classics have fared no better. Cuts

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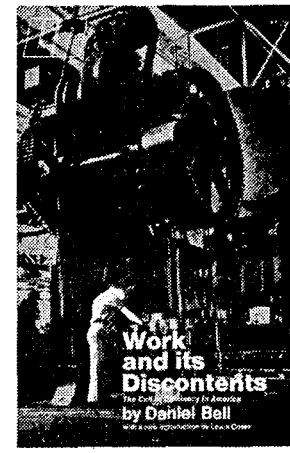

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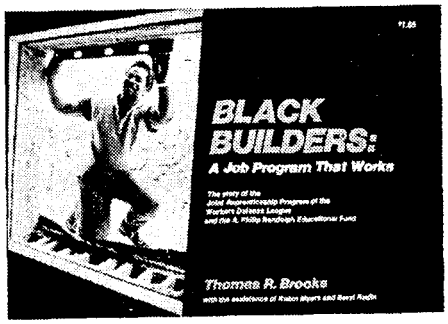

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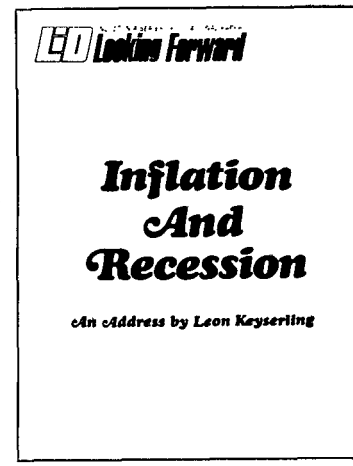

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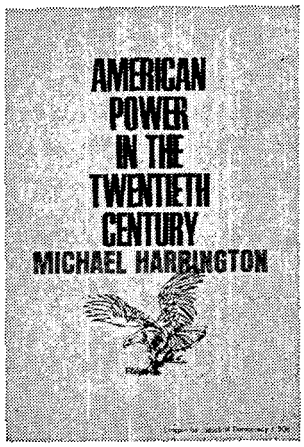

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massacred Gorky, Ostrovsky and Chekhov. Perhaps the crowning blow came when Alexander Griboyedov's play *Gore ot Uma* (Wit Works Woe) had to be banned two weeks before the ceremonial first night scheduled for the anniversary of the October Revolution.

There is a certain method in the way which plays are censored in Czechoslovakia. In the current phase, all allusions to fascism are *verboten*. The "normalized" head of one of the nation's theatres explained recently, not without a certain ingenuousness: "Contemporary Western plays? Out of the question. Either they are pessimistic or else they are antifascist. So they are not for us. Those people take things too seriously. . . ." TV is currently breaking all records for silliness. A play dealing with the Paris Commune was banned at the last moment before it was due to go on the air, and replaced with an arrangement of poems which was afterwards severely criticized. A few minutes before another programme, a well-known actor was expelled from the show. He made the mistake of turning up wearing a roll-neck pullover which was reminiscent of the style of dress of a very popular television commentator in 1968 and who is currently serving a three-year prison term. And last January, at the time the Brussels Congress of Jews was discussing the lot of Soviet Jews, a programme was abruptly cancelled at the last minute, when it was discovered that the four actors who were to take part in it were all of Jewish origin.

Radio listeners have recognized the present director of political programmes—noted for his attacks on Zionism—as the onetime editor of the fascist broadsheet *The Aryan Combat*, published in 1938 and 1939. A number of variety programmes dating back to the German occupation of Czechoslovakia have been dug out of the archives to fill in radio time, since they can hardly be politically damaging. □

A Dominican Detente?

ALTHOUGH THE GENERAL POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE in the Dominican Republic remains disturbed, with indiscriminate assassinations continuing, there is reason to hope for a better future.

A recent photo in *El Caribe*, leading daily of the Dominican Republic, showed a smiling, nattily dressed Juan Bosch at a ceremony opening a new headquarters of his PRD (Dominican Revolutionary party). Bosch seems to have emerged from his semiclandestine existence; he has dropped his extended radio polemic with the Balaguer regime and, conceivably, is making a contribution to a general calming of the Dominican political atmosphere.

At the same time, the Dominican economy is reported to be enjoying a "boomlet," based upon a new wave of foreign investments and an upping of the U.S. sugar import quota, which has brought the economic growth rate close to 7 percent a year. President Balaguer, keeping a tight hold on all the financial strings of the country, is credited with much of this success and with introducing a measure of financial responsibility and honesty into a country where corruption has long been a way of life. The capital city, Santo Domingo, is experiencing a construction boom, and the interior of the country is making substantial infrastructure progress in the form of irrigation, hydroelectric development, land redistribution, roads, etc. The Dominican middle class is benefiting most (shown by a surging demand for foodstuffs, an 8 percent rise in gasoline sales, etc.), but the lower and largely illiterate class is also gaining (27 percent increase in beer consumption, higher attendance in country schools, etc.). The fixed U.S. sugar quota remains the key to the situation. The American presence in the economic sphere retains all its potency. Further, by courting foreign investments —successfully—through such devices as tax exemption to foreign plants producing only for export, Balaguer is laying the ground for future problems involving ultimate control of foreign concessions and corporations. More than $300 million has been invested in this manner during the past few years, including a $200 million Canadian Falconbridge ferrous-nickel mine. There are certain resemblances, not all favorable, between this wave of development and the old Puerto Rican "Operation Bootstrap."

For the first time the issues and struggles in this unhappy land may be on the point of shifting to the sphere of economics, with the dispossessed classes of peasants and workers able to join in a real tussle for a greater share of the growing national pie. The arena could be a democratic one—elections, parliamentary institutions, the legitimate institutions of the people —unions of workers and peasants, professional organizations, etc., rather than the gun, bomb, jail, etc., of recent memory. One must be hopeful.

—S. P. □

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DISSENT

OCTOBER 1971

DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

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"Don't you EVER show anything except 'The Odd Couple'?"

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The Pentagon Papers

We print below two comments, from different points of view, on the Pentagon Papers. As usual in DISSENT, *each author is responsible for his own opinions. No doubt, other contributors will return to these matters in forthcoming issues.*—EDITOR

Joseph Clark

1. The Immorality of Error

WE DIDN'T NEED THE PENTAGON PAPERS TO FIND OUT that the war was wrong. It was wrong when the French fought to retain their control of Indochina, and when President Truman gave them military aid for their colonial war. It was wrong when Dulles and Admiral Radford sought to replace the French after Dienbienphu. It was wrong when President Kennedy sent secret operatives into Vietnam, North and South, to organize guerrilla warfare against the Vietnam Communists.

The war was wrong and American policy was at its worst when President Johnson escalated it into a large-scale ground, air, and sea war. It was an undeclared war, but American battle deaths reached the toll of U.S. killed in action in World War I. The war was wrong when President Nixon took over and sought to "Vietnamize" it.

Publication by the *Times* of the Pentagon Papers has served a useful purpose. Though President Nixon was "winding down" American ground participation in the war, he announced two conditions for full withdrawal. One was understandable, the release of American prisoners. The other—enabling the South Vietnamese regime to prevail against the Communists—was a formula for endless war. The Pentagon Papers helped get this country out of a kind of stupor into which it had fallen after the seeming ineffectiveness of continuous protests against the war and the confusion caused by Nixon's policies. Publication of the Papers helped recreate revulsion against policies of deceit, secrecy, bad judgment, and the endless suffering, death, and destruction caused by a war that could bring no good.

The contention here is not that all wars are unjust and avoidable. It is not that the aim of preventing the expansion of Communist tyranny is wrong. But the value of the Pentagon Papers is that they help show what made *this* war so wrong, and also why the Soviet and Chinese Communists were so pleased, indeed anxious,

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to help keep the United States mired in this war. One great service of the *Times* was that it brought us closer to a policy that would cease so neatly to accommodate the Soviet and Chinese Communists.

At this point we should note a changing aspect of Communist policy with respect to the war.* One reason we may extricate our country from a morass where a small country kept a giant in a pitiable state is that the Communists, especially the Chinese Communists, have reason to switch policy. The switch was signaled by Mao Tse-tung in an interview, presumably read by millions of people, which has called forth a surprising lack of response. In many ways this pronouncement by Mao is the most important to come from a Communist chieftain since Stalin signaled his forthcoming switch to Hitler's side in March 1939.

Edgar Snow had a five-hour "discourse" with Mao in Peking on December 18, last year. In the spring of 1971 Mao authorized publication of the interview, and it appeared in *Life* on April 30. The heart of the "discourse" was that Mao wanted to make a deal with Nixon. Mao told Snow that the Chinese government would be admitting Americans from Left, Middle, and Right. "Should rightists like Nixon, who represented the monopoly capitalists, be permitted to come? He would be welcomed because, Mao explained, at present the problems between China and the U.S.A. would have to be solved with Nixon. Mao would be happy to talk with him, either as a tourist or as President."

Mao made it clear why he was seeking to close a deal with Nixon: he wanted to avoid Armageddon with his Soviet Communist neighbor. Mao made one "concession" to the Russians, explaining to Snow that polemics with the Russians would "have to be carried on for 10,000 years if necessary." Then, after Kosygin himself came to see him, Mao would make his "concession": "After their talk Mao told him that he would take off 1,000 years, but no more."

In matter-of-fact manner Mao described the Soviet Communist mentality: "They thought that they only had to speak the word and all people would listen and obey. They did not believe that there were people who would not do so and that one of them was his humble self." In opting for a deal with the U.S., Mao was playing a trump card against his Soviet Communist neighbors. Mao made it clear that whether or not he was a student of Confucius, he definitely was a student of Stalin.

I hasten to add that this is no argument for the view that Mao only has to speak a word and the Vietnamese Communists will obey. Indeed, one aspect of the Vietnam tragedy is that American policy served to bring traditional foes, China and Vietnam, into tight embrace. It is not difficult to foresee that an end to U.S. military intervention in Vietnam will disclose the same "solidarity" between Vietnamese and Chinese Communists that we have witnessed between the Russians and Chinese. There is some importance to the reports of reduced military aid from China to the North Vietnamese.

Also, there is now a greater Vietnamese Communist interest in ending the war. They too are war-weary. Ever since 1954 the Vietnamese Communists have, politically speaking, lived in the best possible world. They could win in war or in peace. They could choose the advantage of holding the most powerful nation in the world at bay, or they could attain their objectives by ending the war. Ably assisted by Dulles and Rusk, Johnson and Nixon, they chose the former option. Now, it seems, they will seek to accomplish what they might have done before, win all of Vietnam through the peaceful mechanism of coalition politics.

II

THE PENTAGON PAPERS TEND TO BRING OUT the crucial aspect of America's military intervention—that it was wrong from the beginning. No matter what period we use as a starting point, we come to that same conclusion. Publication of the Papers brought back most vividly the issue of the 1964 election campaign. One TV network, in covering the *Times* story, cleverly replayed President Johnson's speech of August 29, 1964:

> I have had advice to load our planes with bombs and to drop them on certain areas that I think would enlarge the war and escalate the war, and result in our committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think

* The editor wishes to testify that Joseph Clark's article containing the next few paragraphs reached his desk two days before the announcement of President Nixon's projected trip to China. Let at least a few people know we have a prophet in our midst.

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ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their own land.

President Johnson repeated this statement many times right up to election eve. The apologists for this deception now say that the documents published by the *Times* were only "contingency plans." Walt Rostow, John P. Roche, and General Maxwell D. Taylor use this argument as though the "contingency" had not, in fact, become actual policy. What is more, the plans for bombing and large-scale use of ground forces were "contingent" on only one condition —to defeat the Communists in battle, or at best, prevent them from taking over South Vietnam.

On August 18, 1964, General Taylor, then Johnson's ambassador in Saigon, cabled that pacification plans were not working. "Something must be added in the coming months," Taylor urged. To maintain the morale of the Khanh government then in office, Taylor wanted to give him "assurance of our readiness to bring added pressure on Hanoi. . . ." The something that had to be added, Taylor explained, was "deliberate escalation of pressure against North Vietnam. . . ." To revive Khanh's morale, the Taylor cable called for "a carefully orchestrated bombing attack on NVN directed primarily at infiltration and other military targets."

John P. Roche, writing in the *AFL–CIO News,* June 26, seeks to overcome the impression conveyed by the Pentagon Papers with the argument that military officials "are paid to plan for wars." That's all that was happening in 1964, Roche says. But, if the contingent condition is something as wide-open as maintaining a puppet regime in South Vietnam, and if that regime lacks popular support, and if the only way to enable that regime to hang on is to launch a large-scale war causing millions of casualties and destroying the country you are supposed to be saving, what article of the American Constitution, what precept of morality and what "contingency" can possibly be cited to defend the deception that actually occurred in 1964?

The "contingency" alibi falls on its face under the impact of the events described in the Pentagon documents. After receiving General Taylor's cable, President Johnson devoted his election campaign to a denunciation of the idea of enlarging the war. He disclaimed any intention of going beyond the policy of giving advice and providing the Vietnamese with "equipment to help themselves." Even that kind of aid, Johnson conceded, produces casualties, and he cited the nearly 200 men lost on aid missions to Vietnam over a period of several years. That's about as many as were lost because of Fourth of July accidents in Texas, Johnson added. And then he pressed the argument home against his Republican opponent, who was openly advocating an enlargement of the war: "But we think it is better to lose 200 than to lose 200,000. For that reason we have tried very carefully to restrain ourselves and not to enlarge the war."

Were the Pentagon plans and the Taylor cables merely "contingency plans" when Johnson made that speech? The evidence of the Pentagon Papers shows President Johnson in obvious agreement with his secretary of State, his ambassador to Vietnam, his defense secretary, and his military advisers in preparing a carefully orchestrated escalation of the war because they realized in August of 1964 that "something must be added" to save the South Vietnam regime. And since the U.S. had identified its interests with that regime, on August 26, 1964, the Joint Chiefs of Staff submitted a memorandum backing up General Taylor's recommendations as "essential to prevent a complete collapse of the U.S. position in Southeast Asia." In that Memorandum the Joint Chiefs indicated that the U.S. had used and would continue to use a policy of deliberately eliciting Communist military retaliation. Their memorandum said: "As part of the program for increased pressures, the OPLAN 34A operations and the Desota patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin should be resumed, the former on an intensified but still covert basis."

The Defense Department outlined a course of action to provoke military response to its own military actions, partly in order to make the involvement in a large-scale war seem inevitable. Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton described that policy in his memorandum of September 3, 1964. U.S. military actions, he wrote, "should be likely at some point to provoke a military DRV response" and "the provoked response should be likely to provide good grounds for us to escalate if we wished." That this was a policy of planned

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provocation is further underlined by McNaughton's caution that "the timing and crescendo should be under our control, with the scenario capable of being turned off at any time. . . ."

How closely President Johnson was associated with this policy was made clear by Assistant Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs William P. Bundy. In a memorandum dated September 8, 1964, Bundy cites the Gulf of Tonkin incident as a model for U.S. policy. He adds:

> The main further question is the extent to which we should add elements to the above actions that would tend deliberately to provoke a DRV reaction, and consequent retaliation by us. Examples of actions to be considered would be running U.S. naval patrols increasingly close to the North Vietnamese coast and/or associating with 34A operations. We believe such deliberately provocative elements should not be added in the immediate future while the GVN is still struggling to its feet. By early October, however, we may recommend such actions depending on GVN progress and Communist reaction in the meantime, especially to U.S. naval patrols.

The plan became action because, as Bundy noted in a paper dated November 5, 1964: "The President is clearly thinking in terms of a Gulf of Tonkin rationale, whether for an action that would show toughness and hold the line till we can decide the big issue, or as a basis for starting a clear course of action under the broad options."

There was no question among President Johnson's advisers that their plans for escalating the war were the President's plans—except that a small unpleasantness intervened, the national elections. In his memorandum of September 3, 1964, McNaughton describes the reasons for U.S. military action "outside the borders of South Vietnam": deteriorating conditions in South Vietnam, little support by the populace to the Saigon regime, and "war weariness . . . apparent." His supplementary comment indicates what a "contingency" the elections were.

> During the next two months [McNaughton wrote] because of the lack of "rebuttal time" before election to justify particular actions which may be distorted to the U.S. public, we must act with special care—signaling to the DRV that initiatives are being taken, to the GVN that we are behaving energetically despite the restraints of our political season, and to the U.S. public that we are behaving with good purpose and restraint.

III

WITH MONOTONOUS FREQUENCY the Pentagon Papers describe the "contingency" that will and that did call forth a large-scale war by the U.S.: *the inability of the unstable Saigon regime to gain the support of the people.* If war is contingent on such circumstances, and if a constitutional declaration of war is to be avoided, a policy of enlarging the war requires secrecy, stealth, and provocative actions. The Pentagon Papers reveal that all those elements were supplied. One wonders how much provocation the Congress of the United States was going to take in view of the Executive action based on keeping the Congress in the dark, but at this point the Congress was shamefully quiescent. Bundy's paper of November 5, 1964, shows how the constitutional issue was handled: "We probably do not need additional Congressional authority, even if we decide on very strong action. A session of this rump Congress might well be the scene of a messy Republican effort."

Congress was not consulted, but by September 7, 1964, the die had been cast at a high-level White House meeting. The Pentagon historians describe the results of the meeting over which President Johnson presided: "the new year was anticipated as the occasion for beginning overt military operations against North Vietnam." Meanwhile, in his campaign the President was repeating the phrase again and again, that this was a war not for American boys, but one "that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their own land."

What started as reprisal raids after the Gulf of Tonkin attack in August 1964, became sustained and large-scale aerial bombardment in early 1965. Since bombing alone can't win any war, let alone a guerrilla war, on April 1, 1965, President Johnson took a number of momentous steps. He authorized the dispatch of 18–20,000 additional ground troops to Vietnam; he ordered two additional Marine battalions to Vietnam along with a Marine Air squadron; and he approved "a change of mission for all Marine battalions deployed to Vietnam to permit their more active use. . . ."

Thus the big war got under way. No conceivable "contingency" alibi is possible to ex-

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plain away the official order that spells out the President's orders. It is a National Security Action memorandum dated April 6, 1965, signed by McGeorge Bundy and addressed to the secretary of State, the secretary of Defense, and the director of Central Intelligence, in which the order to manipulate the public is made clear in paragraph 11:

> The President desires that with respect to the actions in paragraphs 5 through 7 [the paragraphs ordering large-scale American ground forces into action in Vietnam] premature publicity be avoided by all possible precautions. The actions themselves should be taken as rapidly as practicable, *but in ways that should minimize any appearance of sudden changes in policy*, and official statements on these troop movements will be made only with the direct approval of the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of State. The President's desire is that these movements and changes should be understood as being gradual and wholly consistent with existing policy. [Emphasis added.]

On April 1, 1965, the date of the White House meeting which authorized the transformation of the war into a large-scale American war, President Johnson had a press conference. As the *Times* recorded it in a feature entitled, "What They Said in Public and in Private," the question was asked:

> Mr. President, General Taylor said yesterday he would be bringing you some definitive proposals [on Vietnam] today. Do you envision anything very dramatic in these proposals?

The President replied:

> I think that we are inclined to be too dramatic about our prophecies and our predictions and I might say too irresponsible sometimes. . . . I know of no far-reaching strategy that is being suggested or promulgated. . . .

That is how the war was announced, or rather denied: a war that has taken, since that April 1, over 1 million lives, created 3 million refugees, destroyed thousands of villages and hamlets, divided the American nation more than ever before in at least a century, defoliated a good part of an entire country, produced the horror of My Lai, and introduced heroin on a large scale in the U.S. armed forces.

IV

THOUGH THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION wrote the sorriest chapter of the Vietnam story, it's wrong no matter where you start reading. I say this with full recognition that there are always degrees of guilt, of bad and good; that there are grays as well as blacks and whites in historical records. Eisenhower, for example, looks good by comparison with Johnson, especially when he rejected large-scale military intervention at the time of the French defeat in 1954. (That was when Vice President Nixon tended to agree with Admiral Radford that intervention, up to and including nuclear intervention, was a good thing.)

But Eisenhower looks good *only* by comparison with what came a decade later. The Pentagon historians record the "direct role" of the United States "in the ultimate breakdown of the Geneva settlement," the accord that ended the war between France and Vietnam in 1954. Immediately after the Geneva agreement, which we refused to sign but said we would "respect," the Eisenhower administration dispatched a CIA sabotage team, headed by Colonel Edward G. Lansdale, to organize guerrilla warfare in North Vietnam. The mission tells us many things of great value, especially because of the heroic aura that has surrounded Lansdale's operation and his reputation as a proponent of a "democratic revolution" against Communism. Heroism there was, but democratic revolution there was not. The Lansdale mission confronts us with a faulty aphorism, that you must fight fire with fire. Perhaps one of the most pernicious concepts that came out of the Cold War was that we had to use Communist methods to fight Communism.

What the National Security Council discusses at its meetings becomes apparent from the Pentagon Papers. Matters the Vietnamese, Chinese, or even Soviet *politburos* discuss at their meetings are quite different in at least one respect. The Communists know the importance of politics. Here I'm not considering truthfulness or the use of unclean means to obtain political objectives. I'm simply stating the advantage the Communists derive from their precept of "putting politics in command."

If there is a single failure that was attached to U.S. policy in Vietnam from the beginning, it is the belief that the problem could be resolved by a military solution. Any number of congressional committees, hundreds of federally subsidized scholars, and scores of Intelligence experts studied Lenin to discover the

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secrets of Communism. Whatever they learned, this government never grasped two fundamental aspects of Lenin's revision of Marxism. Lenin saw the power and scope of the national and colonial revolutions in the underdeveloped two-thirds of the world. He also saw the importance of the peasants' hunger and demand for land. I'm not discussing here what soon became obvious, that the Communists were manipulating and exploiting these issues. Communist revolutions mobilized oppressed nations to fight for their liberation and then reduced those nations to subjugation, even eliminating entire nations. Communists mobilized peasant armies to overthrow landlord-based regimes and then the land was taken away from the peasants, who were subjected to the exploitation of a primitive accumulation of capital such as Marx describes so vividly in *Capital*. The Communist betrayal of both the national and peasant revolutions—whether in China, Russia, Vietnam, or Cuba—is not at question here. The point is that successive American administrations supported colonialism, even of the ruthless French type in Southeast Asia, backed landlord-based regimes and undemocratic military juntas instead of the necessary social, political, economic transformations—the democratic revolution.

The CIA, it seems, was going to change all that. Lansdale was a shining example of the "new Intelligence," the kind that saw the value of politics and the real issues in Southeast Asia. We read Lansdale's report of how he "arrived in Saigon with a small box of files and clothes and a borrowed typewriter." The stage is set for a novel, at least by Graham Greene. Dramatically Lansdale decribes the situation: "Dien Bien Phu had fallen. The French were capitulating to the Vietminh at Geneva." Communist saboteurs were blowing up ammunition dumps at the airport. Things were rough. Quickly, Lansdale describes how he helped devise "a new psychological warfare" campaign. "Rumor campaigns were added to the tactics and tried out in Hanoi. It was almost too late."

The first action of this "democratic revolution" was "a carefully planted story," as Lansdale puts it, of how a Chinese Communist regiment in Tonkin was raping the girls. And the denouement, with Lansdale reporting, not Woody Allen: ". . . the story was to be planted by soldiers of the Vietnamese Armed Psywar company in Hanoi dressed in civilian clothes. The troops received their instructions silently, dressed in civilian clothes, went on the mission, and failed to return. They had deserted to the Vietminh." But Lansdale had his triumph when weeks later Tonkinese told a story of the misbehavior of a Chinese division in Vietnamese territory.

Still more drastic steps were taken. In the last days of the French colonial occupation of Hanoi, Lansdale's team succeeded in "contaminating the oil supply of the bus company." Mysteriously, Lansdale says, "U.S. adherence to the Geneva agreement prevented [the American team] from carrying out the active sabotage it desired to do against the power plant, water facilities, harbor and bridge." Why the bus company's oil supply can be sabotaged in accord with the Geneva agreements, but not the power plant, is never explained by Lansdale.

Obviously, with the Eisenhower administration giving military support to the French and with American "Psywarfare" experts working with the French colonialists, Lansdale was not going to achieve much more than planting a rumor, sabotaging the bus company's oil (in conformance with the Geneva agreement!), and providing plots and treatments for at least two novels. Vietnam continued to live with its tragedy—North and South, there was no democratic revolution.

Of any of the complex relationships among the political groups in Vietnam, the Lansdale report shows not the faintest understanding. It is composed in the spirit and on the level of *Mission Impossible*. But what can be mildly entertaining on television proves to be utterly ridiculous in reality. Indeed, the same point can be made about all the Pentagon Papers thus far released: how little effort they show at coming to grips with the social and political complexities of Vietnam, how utterly absorbed they are in the amoral labyrinths of technique.

V

THE PENTAGON PAPERS came at an opportune moment, and Judge Gurfein and the Supreme Court majority performed a service in the ceaseless struggle to keep the Bill of Rights a vital part of American life. But most of the evidence of the Pentagon Papers has appeared before. Serious opponents of the war have told in detail the reasons for the failure of American

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policy. It is not at all, as John P. Roche would have it, that the *Times* and other papers were displaying nothing but "historical hindsights." Not at all; historians have been telling what a quagmire Vietnam was from the beginning. John Lukacs, author of *A History of the Cold War,* has no illusions about the guilt of the Communists in the Cold War, and he sternly refutes the revisionist historians. Nevertheless, Lukacs is critical of the Dulles policy that has involved us in Vietnam, though not because Lukacs opposes the containment of Soviet and Chinese Communism.

Of the Dulles plans to involve us in the war in 1954, Lukacs wrote as far back as 1961: ". . . this would have been again the wrong war against the wrong enemy, in the wrong place and at the wrong time. Russia was far from being directly involved; even Chinese involvement was but indirect. . . ." With masterly understatement and with foresight, not hindsight, Lukacs wrote: "it is strange how Dulles and Admiral Radford could believe that the intervention of American air power alone could turn the tide of this guerrilla war fought in millet fields and rice paddies." [1]

John Kenneth Galbraith, in *Ambassador's Journal,* also discussed the politics of Vietnam, reproducing a letter he wrote to President Kennedy from New Delhi, March 2, 1962. He warned:

> We are increasingly replacing the French as the colonial military force and will increasingly arouse the resentments associated therewith. Moreover, while I don't think the Russians are clever enough to fix it that way, we are surely playing their game. They couldn't be more pleased than to have us spend our billions in these distant jungles where it does us no good and them no harm. [Galbraith urged:] Keep up the threshold against the commitment of American combat forces. This is of the utmost importance—a few will mean more and more and more.[2]

Walt Rostow and General Taylor were not giving that sort of advice to Kennedy. No more than John P. Roche, Rostow and Taylor were offering that order of foresight to President Johnson as he chased the chimera of military victory, hoping to nail the "coonskin on the wall." How odd, to say no more, that Roche charges the *Times* with "retrospective omniscience." For the good advice that said neither bombing nor fighting on the ground was the proper means for saving Vietnam was *not* taken. Instead, the advice that promised victory at hundreds of junctures from 1965 to the present was taken.

VI

A CAREFUL READING OF THE PENTAGON PAPERS does little to support the notion of a conspiracy by "ruling circles" in this country to get us into and keep us in the Vietnam war. Directly or indirectly, the makers of American policy were shaping it by historical analogy. The Vietnam situation was being compared to, say, the moment in history when Hitler threatened to seize Czechoslovakia. The Western powers did not come to the aid of Czechoslovakia, so not only that country, but peace was lost. At its most explicit, the argument in defense of our Vietnam policy used the tired old figure of the falling dominoes. If we let Vietnam fall, the rest of Southeast Asia will fall, first Thailand, then Indonesia, and so on across the globe. Surely the comparison with Germany and Czechoslovakia in 1938, with Russia and/or China in the past decade, is a gross misuse of historical parallels. Hannah Arendt disposed of this argument with devastating effect:

> It is as if France or England would have tried to stop Hitler, not by making war on him, but by making war on Slovakia as being somehow in collusion with the Nazi government against the Czech government. They would have started bombing Bratislava and intervening in what could only have been a civil war in Czechoslovakia. If anyone in 1938 had thought that this would have helped to stop Hitler, he would not have been very realistic. This is true for all such parallels. Once you really pursue them, they explode. If we say we want to contain China, then we have to take the problem in its own terms; no parallels will help, we have to look to China itself.[3]

As to the dominoes, the sad fact is that Russia has been enabled to push dominoes around the world more easily *because* of our involvement in Vietnam. Surely the fate of Vietnam is

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[1] John Lukacs, *A History of the Cold War* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), p. 111.
[2] John Kenneth Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 270.
[3] Quoted in Theodore Draper, *Abuse of Power* (New York: Viking, 1967), p. 126; from "Containing China: A Round-Table Discussion," *Commentary,* May 1966.

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a poor example for any small nation threatened by invasion, which might be tempted to seek that kind of "help" from America. And the most ironical indication that it is not American military intervention that might help stop the Communists in some situations is what happened in Indonesia. Our hands-off policy when Indonesia was actually threatened by a Chinese-backed Communist coup in October 1965 did not cause Indonesia to fall to the Communists. On the contrary, the Indonesians routed the Communists. The horror of it is that they did so with a ghastly massacre of Indonesian Communists.

Some apologists for U.S. intervention in Vietnam have argued that if the U.S. were not fighting in Vietnam, the Indonesians would not have been able to destroy the Communists. Aside from the dazzling non sequitur in this argument, the Indonesian regime that came to power after the Communists were defeated, rejected the U.S. policy in Vietnam. Foreign Minister Adam Malik of Indonesia declared in the Indonesian Parliament on May 5, 1966:

> But the Indonesian government is still firmly of the opinion that it supports the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. military intervention. The settlement of the Vietnamese problem must be performed on the basis of the freely expressed will of the people of Vietnam, without intervention from any quarter. Indonesia maintains her demand that the U.S. withdraw its military forces from Vietnam, and leave the settlement of the Vietnamese problem to the Vietnamese people themselves.[4]

VII

SHORTLY AFTER the *Times* began publication of the Pentagon Papers, James Reston noted that in all the thousands of pages the discussion was never about right or wrong. At the time of the Bay of Pigs disaster Walter Lippmann pointed out how we are doomed to fail whenever we attempt to imitate the Communist tactics. The ancient precept of ends and means comes back to haunt us in the Vietnam war. It has been argued, for example, that if the Communists win, there will be terrible massacres of anti-Communists. True, after the Geneva accords there were massacres in North Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh murdered thousands of peasants when the Communists betrayed their promise to give them land and instead began collectivization. Bernard Fall wrote that the number of peasants killed between 1954 and 1956 "is variously estimated at between 50,000 and 100,000." The brutal policy of the Ho regime led to a peasant rebellion. For a brief period the North Vietnamese press printed graphic accounts of the terror and torture in the North Vietnamese concentration camps.[5] Citing these murders and condemning them, Michael Harrington wrote in the pages of DISSENT that terrible as the figures mentioned by Fall are, the number of people killed as a result of our continued intervention in Vietnam was 10 times as great.

What was wrong at the beginning was our support of French colonialism in Vietnam. What was wrong as we intensified our intervention was that we sought to settle by military means problems which could only be solved by political means. The regimes we supported in Vietnam and later discarded, or helped overthrow, were all characterized by their lack of democracy, by their failure to bring social and political reform, their inability to win popular support. Ho had his prison camps, Thieu his tiger cages.

The largest immorality of U.S. intervention was the incredible devastation of the land and its people. This involved bombing of villages and the killing of innocents. For example, it is estimated that fully 30 percent of all civilian casualties, and these approach a million, are children under 13. The argument is made that the bombing of Dresden in World War II and the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki were also terribly destructive of civilian lives. They were, and there is little that can be said to justify those bombs. But the war against the Axis was unavoidable, and it was fought for just and necessary ends against a direct threat by German and Japanese imperialism to conquer the world. And Germany and Japan had the means and the power as well as the ideology to make that a very real threat. Yet, because the methods used to fight the Communists in Vietnam were wrong, and if anything helped Communist propaganda the world over, it does not mean that efforts to preserve an independent Berlin or to prevent Communist ex-

[4] Quoted in Draper, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[5] Bernard B. Fall, *Vietnam Witness* (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 124.

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pansion is wrong. It certainly does not mean that wars such as the one against the Axis, or even the UN-backed war against the North Korean invasion of South Korea, were unjust or to be condemned.

VIII

WHAT NOW? The action of the *Times,* the *Washington Post,* and other papers, and their vindication by the courts have again placed the Vietnam issue at the center of politics. *If ever the issue was immediate withdrawal of American forces, that is the issue now.* Division and discord here and abroad, as well as the destruction of the war itself are consequences of continuing the war.

To many, especially among the youth for whom this has been *the* war and *the* major factor in politics and life, it may seem as though the Pentagon Papers prove the futility of working "within the system" and the failure of democracy itself. But others have seen that the action of the *Times* and other newspapers in publishing the Pentagon Papers has in itself been a vindication of democracy. Failures following from a lack of democracy, fiascoes that flow from waging a war in defiance of law and the Constitution, do not disparage the idea of democracy itself. Observe the difficulties the Communist newspapers have had in trying to explain both the government's prosecution of the *Times* and the action of the Supreme Court.

Izvestia, it seems, had just exposed the *Times* as the major organ of American imperialism. And then, lo and behold; the *Times* was in the dock. Who *were* the imperalists? *Izvestia* fell back on a transparent shibboleth—the "contradictions among the ruling circles." It seems to me that not only here but in Russia and other Communist countries too, some of the values of a free press, of an independent judiciary, and of constitutional government will be imparted by the saga of the Pentagon Papers.

None of this can vindicate any of the administrations which pursued policies that drove us to war through an overweaning use of the executive power and disregard for the other branches of government. Perhaps a major lesson of Vietnam is that there is a sense in which the theory of "permanent revolution" is valid. It is valid to the extent that all power corrupts. It is valid because wherever there is social organization, *any* social organization, there will be germs of elitism, of threats against the rights of others, attempts of the powerful to subjugate the weak. Democracy must always be fought for. The genius of the Founding Fathers was that they sought a basis for permanently assuring freedom and power to the people. But even their work needs constant vigilance, at the least.

Even the villainy portrayed in the Pentagon Papers is not black on black. Surely one of the villains in the escalation of the war from the Kennedy to the Johnson administration was Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Yet at least a partial hero of the revelations is the same McNamara, who came to see the evil of the war he himself had pressed and was the major mover to get its history written in a way that did not whitewash the war-makers. Earlier we had come to see how political figures can change for the better and become positive forces in political life. Surely Robert Kennedy was one such person, and perhaps Lyndon Johnson knows whereof he speaks when he suggests that McNamara and Kennedy got together to see to it that a history would be written.

And there are degrees of wrong in policy and politics. When President Kennedy increased the number of military advisers by thousands and allowed secret operatives to go into battle in Vietnam he was tempting an escalation of the war. When he turned down General Taylor's proposal to send a force of 8–10,000 men to fight in Vietnam, he was on the side of right. There is a difference between the Kennedy part and the Johnson part in the Vietnam war. What Kennedy would have done, whether he would have followed the advice of Galbraith and Schlesinger, if he had not been killed, can only be guessed at.

Our chance for seeing to it that in the future Executive power operates in the light of day, and in recognition of policies arrived at by public debate, lies in active and successful politics. The year for ending the war is 1971. The year for better politics is 1972. Perhaps with an assist from 11 million new young voters the quality of our politics can be improved.

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Lionel Abel

2. On Imitating the Communists

There's no law that says that I,
wishing to restrain another
from tyranny and cruelty,
should practice them myself. . . .
—From Calderón's *Life Is a Dream*

IT IS NOW BEING SAID everywhere that anti-Communism was in the main responsible for the policy we followed to disaster in Southeast Asia. Is this indeed the case? Had we been liberated from "anti-Communism" (and from which those who use the term make it clear they would like to liberate us), would we have been able to frame a "good"—that is to say, an intelligent—Southeast Asian policy?

Now I do not see how any foreign policy for this country that may be called intelligent can do without some elements of anti-Communism. All the same, I cannot but grant that there is one particular sense in which it is quite true to say that our policy in Southeast Asia—or rather, what was bad about this policy—may be laid up to anti-Communism. Yet this special —and very hurtful—influence of anti-Communism on our policy is hardly ever remarked by the critics.

How in fact did anti-Communism affect our Asian policy? In this way: it divided the Left. And with the Left divided, it was possible for the imperialist line taken on Asia by our government to pass without serious challenge. Our government is one that responds to pressures, and the only serious pressure put on it during the whole period of its "anti-Communist" policies was set in motion by the Right. In this sense I think it true to say that anti-Communism played a part in the unfortunate and even evil decisions made by our leaders over the past two decades. But I take it that this is *not* the sense that the statement "anti-Communism led to the Vietnam disaster" has for most of the people who have written to this effect, or believe this when they read it or hear it said.

As to the division on the Left: should American left-wingers have tried to get along with the Communists? and protected them from the Right during the fifties as they did during the thirties? Would such a perspective on the part of the Left have led to a different foreign policy perspective on the part of our government?

Unquestionably. Today the American government, with resistance to its Vietnam policy mounting, will certainly have to frame some new view of its relations to Asia, and possibly to Europe also. But I should like to point out here that while the Vietnam policy was not only a bad but an unsuccessful one, it did not exhaust all the possibilities of defeat or of immorality that were open to the American policy-makers. There were alternative disasters to the particular disaster which was not avoided in Vietnam. And one of these disasters might well have resulted from the adoption of a policy that could have been supported by an undivided Left, that is to say a Left that did not exclude the Communists.

Undeniably, Communism presents a very special problem for a leftist not a Communist. It will do no good to pretend that it does not. While it is true that at the present time the problem the American people have to be concerned with is the actions of their own government in Southeast Asia, it is not the case that Americans can be unconcerned with the actions of the existing Communist governments, that is to say those of Russia, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba; nor can they be unconcerned with the support of the actions of these governments—*no matter what these governments do*—by those who claim membership in an American Left.

I think it must be admitted that a serious attempt to hold an American left wing together without the Communists was *not* made in this country. Here, perhaps, Irving Howe will disagree with me, and say that DISSENT represented an effort to hold a grouping on the Left together without, and even against, the Communists. My point then is that this effort by

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DISSENT must be said to have been something of a failure. Moreover, swinging to the other side, that movement on the Left initiated by A. J. Muste, who declared that he was *not* going to exclude the Communists, has been something of what must be called at the least a partial success, certainly in antiwar action. I don't like to admit this, but the truth is the truth, and the best thing now is not to deny it. One unfortunate consequence of the success of the Muste tactic, now being followed by Dave Dellinger, has been to create a more favorable attitude among the youth toward existing Communist governments. And this in turn led to the marked inability of the youth to react, for example, to the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.

To sum up: the objections to constituting an American Left *with* the Communists ought to be perfectly clear. On the other hand, we now see the fateful consequences of not having been able to create, without the Communists, a Left that could be effective. It is in this unique and single sense that there is some truth to the statement now being bandied about that anti-Communism led us into the Southeast Asia disaster.

That the framers of our Asian policies did not have to meet the challenge of criticism from the Left I would give as the main reason for the rigidity of their adherence to policies now no longer defendable. But it of course does not explain why our policy-makers should have thought wrong policies right. It explains, if you like, why they held on to wrong policies, but not why they formed them in the first place.

SO IT IS TIME TO ASK DIRECTLY: just *what* was wrong with our Southeast Asian policy? About this there is far less agreement among the critics of that policy than about the fact that the policy was a bad one.

To go back to the matter of anti-Communism, for a moment: anti-Communism may be said to have been responsible for our Korean policy, which I am inclined to think was in the main correct. I except the crossing of the 38th parallel by MacArthur, but this particular action can hardly be explained by anti-Communism, since Acheson, as anti-Communist as MacArthur, was opposed to this adventure. In any case, I bring up the matter of Korea because our policy in Korea can still be defended, whereas our policy in South Vietnam cannot.

What was the difference between the two policies, both of them inspired or motivated by anti-Communism?

In my opinion, our error in Vietnam was twofold. We were guilty (1) of an intellectual mistake; and the consequences of this were (2) the grossness and immorality of our action.

What was our intellectual mistake? We assumed—by "we" I mean our policy-makers—that the Communist movement in Vietnam was nothing more than a means for providing new ruling-class cadres in a situation where power had crumbled. Now it may be that there are parts of the world in which the Communist movements amount to no more than this, but in Vietnam the Communists had fought the French for some 20 years, and attracted, in defeating them, most of the patriots in the country. Our characterization of the Vietnam Communists was a false and self-deluding one. This error as to what Communism in Vietnam represented led us to what I have called a moral error, but in which, when one thinks of it, there was also an admixture of intellectual error. Now what was this second error of ours? It was the idea that we could and *should* imitate the Communists, do as they were doing, or rather as we *thought* they were doing. Our policy-makers—and President John F. Kennedy must be included among them—began to think that we, too, could create a new ruling-class personnel to compete with the cadres being put forward by the Communists. Our policy-makers decided to do nothing less than to provide a new ruling class for the people of South Vietnam.

I knew that this was the case before I read the Pentagon Papers, but the information provided by Daniel Ellsberg makes the point incontestable.[1] In fact, the whole difference be-

[1] Asked by a reporter on the *Today Show* how he justified breaking his oath of loyalty, Mr. Ellsberg replied that enough people in government had sufficient motive not to break their oath for our government to function. But to give this as a justification for breaking his own oath of loyalty is like saying that one does not have to pay one's taxes since others are going to pay theirs. But how does this answer the question: why are you *justified* in not paying yours? It seems strange that a person like Ellsberg, who took such a drastic step on what he claims moral grounds, should have given so little thought to the moral justification of his ac-

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tween the operation in South Vietnam and in South Korea becomes perfectly clear. In South Korea there was a *government,* which we provided with military and economic aid. In South Vietnam there was an *area,* which we provided with a government, and also with military and economic aid. But North Vietnam also proposed itself as the legitimate government of the people to the South. And if the matter of who was to represent South Vietnam had been put to a vote, that vote would have gone to Ho Chi Minh. (This is denied to be sure by Robert Shaplen.)

Perhaps the people did not know their best interests, and that is why they would have voted for him. But this hardly justified us in supporting against him (after Diem was "removed") Thieu and Ky, former supporters of French colonial rule in Vietnam, and with little backing from the people. Here we were involved in doing exactly what we assumed the Communist movement was not merely doing wrongly, but wrong in trying to do. And this we tried to do ourselves. Thus we could not disapprove of them morally, and this seems to have induced us to become morally *inferior* to them. To complicate our position further, we had completely misread the character of the Communist movement in that part of the world.

Out of these confusions came the brutality and stupidity of our Southeast Asian policy: the military mistakes and the war crimes, the bombings and the blunderings. If any country ever deserved to be defeated in a military and political operation, it was the U.S.A. in Southeast Asia. And we have been so defeated.[2]

BUT WHAT NOW? WHAT OF THE FUTURE? About this the critics of our Asia policy are not too clear. Sometimes they say we have to stop being anti-Communist, but as I have shown, if there is the problem of anti-Communism, there is also the problem of avoiding it. And I am struck by the fact that Noam Chomsky now applies to the American government the very term Sidney Hook once applied to the Communist movement. Chomsky now says that the American policy-makers engaged in *conspiracy,* even as Sidney Hook some years ago singled out *conspiracy* as the outstanding fault of the Communists. Hook did not foresee then that the kind of action he wanted against Communist groups might be patterned finally on the actions taken by the Communists themselves, and Noam Chomsky does not see today that in charging our own policy-makers with *conspiracy,* he is adopting the very style and type of accusation formerly employed by Hook.

Probably there is an element of the conspiratorial in all grand-scale political and military action. Certainly there is an element of conspiracy in revolutionary action. Trotsky never tried to conceal this. He pointed it up in his *History.* Against Sidney Hook's slogan, "Heresy, yes—Conspiracy, no," I can imagine Trotsky thundering, "Heresy, yes! Conspiracy, yes!" What was wrong with our policy-makers was the policy they decided on, not that they sometimes whispered it, or did not broadcast it. Yes, they deceived Congress to some extent, but still I must insist that I was aware of what their policy was, and I had less information than Congress. And I am not claiming that I am the only one who was not fooled. Once again, the important thing was their policy, and not the fact that they did not scruple to conspire in trying to make it effective. But didn't the opposition conspire? Wasn't there conspiracy among Ellsberg and his friends to bring the Pentagon Papers to the public? And how about the Berrigan brothers who called their group "the Eastern Conspiracy to Save Lives"?

ONCE AGAIN, WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? Let us resolve never again to imitate the Communists. What does Nietzsche say? "Gaze not too long

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tion. I bring up this matter because so many of our left-wing moralists seem committed to a moralist-immoralism not unlike that of their opposites in government.

[2] Here I would like to answer a recent justification of our Southeast Asian policy by Professor Walt Rostow, former adviser to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. On the television program *Issues and Anwers,* Professor Rostow was asked what we prevented from happening in South Vietnam by our military intervention there. He replied that if we had not intervened, Japan and India would have been forced to become nuclear powers. Is that what we went to war in Vietnam to prevent? But we did not go to war with Russia in 1945 or with China in 1960 to keep these openly hostile states from becoming nuclear powers. I find it impossible to believe that we really took the step from peace to war to keep two nations friendly to and dependent on us this side of atomic power.

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into the abyss or the abyss will gaze into you." This has already happened to those who got the support of our government against the Communists. It can still happen to those who seek the support of the Communists against our government. But here I want to make more concrete what I mean by not imitating the Communists in foreign-policy matters. There is one point especially where we should not imitate them. Let us never propose to set up ruling-class cadres in areas where the old rulers have lost power. The United States government should not be in the business of creating ruling-class groups anywhere, and this for several reasons, but here I want to stress only one. It is impossible for us to claim that we want coexistence with Russia and China—or rather, we can claim it, but we cannot obtain it—if we insist that we, or groups created by us, can be the heirs to social chaos.

The Communist claim is that Communism is the heir to social chaos, and this claim the Communists cannot surrender. They will not accept the view that where the classes we supported have crumbled, we, and not they, can take over. If we try to take over, they will fight us. So we cannot at the same time try to come to some agreement with them in the SALT talks, for instance, about reducing armaments, and at the same time try to supplant them in the role they consider rightfully theirs, as heirs to social chaos. We should try to prevent social chaos wherever it is possible for us to do so. But once it has come, we cannot prevent its exploitation by the Communists.

Is there another role for us? If we cannot succeed to chaos we can, I think, succeed to tyranny. We cannot come after chaos. The Communists can. But we can come after the Communists.[3] They can come whenever people need so many things that they cannot decide which they want most. We can only come where the people are quite certain that what they want is us. And by us, I mean our institutions. Is there a single country where the Communists have been in power for more than 10 or 15 years and where the people in the main do not want democratic institutions like ours? I do not think so. So I suggest this alternative foreign policy for the United States to the one we have pursued for more than 20 years: let us stop trying to compete with the Communists in those backward areas of the world where dictatorship can perhaps bring modernization more speedily than can be done by capitalist investment. And in any case, if we *do* want to compete with the Communists in those areas, we are not to carry competition to the point of imitating their tactics. Certainly we must never again try to set up ruling-class cadres in the power vacuums left by discredited regimes.

But on the other hand, should we not respond more interestedly and more forcefully and more dramatically to those countries already under Communist tyranny who have indicated a desire for freedom? I do not think we did enough for the East Berliners in 1954, or for the Poles and the Hungarians in 1956, or for the Czechs in 1968. To be sure our support of peoples engaged in revolt against Communist tyranny necessarily had to fall short of war. But there are other means of political struggle than open warfare, and the United States government disregarded these means of struggle during the crises in Berlin, in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The culminating folly in this regard was the attitude of Senator Eugene McCarthy in 1968 when Czechoslovakia was invaded. The Senator made fun of President Johnson for having convened the Security Council during the emergency. Evidently in the Midwest, where the Senator was best known, as he saw the matter, Czechoslovakia was not so important. Even on this smaller matter, he was, as Jeremy Larner has shown, mistaken. And on the larger matter, I think that President Johnson should have done something far more dramatic than just to convene the Security Council. Once the invasion had taken place he should have proposed through the UN to withdraw our armies from South Vietnam (we are withdrawing them anyway), if the Russians would withdraw from Czechoslovakia.

We *have* a duty, a moral as well as a political duty, to be of assistance to all those groups whose urgent need is for democratic processes and forms. We have no such obligation to impose a caricature of democracy on people whose needs may be more economic than political,

[3] Will we have to fight the Communists if we present ourselves as their probable heirs? No doubt this cannot be excluded. In any case, is it not better for them to have to fight people who want our institutions than for us to have to fight people who want theirs?

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and who may prefer the kind of aid they can get from our enemies. Should we not reflect on the fact—no doubt the Communists have not ignored this—that Communism came first in a backward and not in an advanced country, and that the successes of Communism have been exclusively in backward countries? In Czechoslovakia, which is an advanced country, Communism is very clearly a failure. Moreover, as Russian economic development advances, the Russian political structure seems to decay. Communism does indeed seem to be an alien element in the advanced areas of the world, even as efforts at American-style democracy seem alien in the backward areas.

Am I preaching something like what the Communists themselves advocated in Germany before Hitler, when they advanced the slogan, "After Hitler our turn"? Perhaps. But I am not frightened by the fact that some resemblance can be found between their slogan and what I am proposing. I am not convinced at this date that a united front by the Socialists and the Communists could have defeated Hitler, and I must point out that after Hitler, and the war, of course, the Communists did in fact have their turn, in the Balkans, in Poland, and in Eastern Germany, including Prussia. But I must point out here an essential difference between my proposal and the Communist slogan of 1932. Their turn could not come until after a war, as we have seen. Our turn can only come if there is no war, for in a real war we and they would both be destroyed. Moreover, the view I advocate would add to our policies a historical perspective which they have always lacked. When we think of ourselves as the heirs to backwardness we stress, inevitably, our industrial power, rather than our political institutions. If we think of ourselves as the heirs of Communists permitting *them* to be the heirs to backwardness in the undeveloped countries, then we may see ourselves in a clearer political-historical perspective, one that will stress our capacities as creators of policies and institutions, rather than as makers or tenders of machines.

Steven Kelman

A Letter From Singapore

WITHIN ONE MONTH last spring, several events took place that may have shattered Singapore's image as a democratic outpost in Asia. First, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew had four journalists on a Chinese-language newspaper jailed for printing a picture of Chairman Mao playing ping-pong. Then he accused an English-language daily of accepting money from Communist agents in Hong Kong, upon which the paper folded. Shortly afterwards, he harassed a somewhat critical English-language paper out of existence. And finally, he announced the expulsion from Singapore of *New York Times* stringer Anthony Polsky.

This news broke a long spate of reports from the island republic indicating successes at every turn. Lee Kuan Yew and his People's Action party (PAP), whose admirers had once been restricted largely to a coterie of social democrats, in recent years have burst out as mini-superstars to Asia-watchers. Two major surveys by regionally based journalists—*Time Out of Hand,* by Robert Shaplen of the *New Yorker,* and *In the Teeth of the Dragon,* by Dennis Bloodworth of the London *Observer*—highlight Singapore as the area's model government.

What then is going on?

The story starts with Lee Kuan Yew, a Cambridge-educated labor lawyer who founded the

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PAP with a group of socialist student friends who hung around the Malayan Forum in London. Although, like three-quarters of Singapore, of Chinese origin, Lee comes from a wealthy family where English was spoken at home. Lee only learned Chinese as an adult—when he became a politician.

Lee Kuan Yew and his socialist friends let Communists into the PAP from the beginning, because he believed that Communist support was needed for the independence struggle. Communist strength among the overseas Chinese in Singapore rests on a mixture of ideology and Chinese nationalism. Overseas Chinese have rarely won acceptance in the communities where they have settled, and their loyalty to China gives them a sense of security they would otherwise lack. The center of Communist strength in the early PAP was mainly among students who had all the anti-Western fervor of their counterparts in other Asian countries.

Lee first attracted attention outside Singapore for his success in defeating the Communists within the united front. In defeating them, Lee's methods displayed the same mixture of fair play and dirty pool, democracy and authoritarianism, which have characterized his regime since.

It seems almost certain that Lee did not have majority support among the *members* of the PAP for breaking with the Communists, and it is highly questionable whether he could have defeated the Communists at all without help from the British. As early as 1957 the pro-Communists won half the seats on the 12-man party executive—and Lee's people won back control only after five of these six were arrested by the British authorities. When Lee chose to make an open break with the Communists in 1961, he did so over an issue—merger with Malaya into a Federation of Malaysia—where his position was relatively more popular than that of the Communists. At that time a majority of its parliamentary representatives stayed with PAP, but a clear majority of the members left the party.

Was it then simply a case of Lee stealing control of PAP from the Communists? Not quite. For Lee's truncated PAP did succeed in winning two trials of popular strength with the Barisan Socialis (Socialist Front) which the pro-Communists formed. In the 1962 referendum on merger with Malaya, where the Barisan counseled blank votes, the pro-merger position got 70 percent of the total vote, including blanks. In the 1963 general elections, PAP got 46 percent of the vote to the Barisan's 31 percent. Yet lest anyone think that this was a clear indication that Lee had majority support, it should be noted that some Barisan leaders were in jail during both electoral tests and that the party had some trouble printing its election literature.

So THE CASE is hard to judge. And the same goes for any judgment of the state of democracy in Singapore today.

Political parties? The major opposition is the Barisan Socialis, which is legal but has decided since 1967, when its members resigned from Parliament, not to contest elections. The Barisan puts out a biweekly in English *(The Plebian)* and a weekly in Chinese. It has a headquarters and its number is listed in the phone directory. Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book* cannot be sold in Singapore bookstores, but it can be legally reprinted in Barisan publications.

While legal, the Barisan is harassed. It is severely restricted from holding demonstrations. A number of its members are in jail, indefinitely and without trial, charged with terrorism. (The party chairman, Dr. Lee Siew Chow, has never been arrested.) There has been some terrorism, and the government claims it cannot have trials for fear of revealing its informers (other democratic governments have managed to overcome this difficulty). There is also an Orwellian system by which the prisoners can be released immediately upon their denunciation of Communism, which is broadcast, then rebroadcast over TV.

There are more than 10 other registered legal parties, none of much significance. With the Barisan refusing to contest the 1968 elections, the PAP won all 58 seats in Parliament. In 1970, Lee decided on the necessity for some "younger blood" in the party, and had four deputies resign, which led to by-elections. According to such supporters of Lee as Alex Josey, a longtime Singapore resident who serves as his speech-writer, Lee called the by-elections because he wanted to put some life into Singapore's lagging democratic system. PAP men were opposed by four candidates of a quickly established new party, whose candidates re-

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ceived between 30 percent and 40 percent of the vote. The polls were generally thought fair.

Officially Lee is on record as regretting the lack of a strong non-Communist opposition party. PAP sources intimate that they feel one will come up soon, although they say they have no intention of creating one. Dr. Goh Keng Swee, the Defense Minister, created somewhat of a furor when he stated recently at the University of Singapore that intellectual sterility was the greatest danger facing Singapore. Lee has told his own party backbenchers that, since there is no opposition in Parliament, they should act as one. Some of the backbenchers have been surprisingly bold in asking questions about urban renewal, the cost of living, and the labor situation, but it is questionable how much a backbencher can question his own party before he gets further back than the bench.

Some of Lee's non-Communist critics feel that he is intolerant, autocractic, and thin-skinned. "Lee proclaims his belief in democracy only because it's the popular thing to do," says David Marshall, a Jewish lawyer of Syrian descent who was Singapore's Chief Minister for a year in the mid-fifties and is a longtime opponent of Lee's. "He would much rather be a commissar, so he could effectively silence opponents like me." Others disagree. And, of course, people like Marshall are not silenced.

THE MEDIA? Here the situation has gotten worse in the last months, with the closing first of the *Eastern Sun* and then the *Singapore Herald,* and the jailing of journalists from the *Nanyang Sit Poh.* Again, the situation is ambiguous. The largest newspaper, The *Straits Times,* which also has a Malay-language edition, is probably strong enough to take on the government were it inclined to do so; but it is not. The Chinese press has been rather forthright in taking up the complaints of people hurt by some of the government's actions. Furthermore, the *New Nation,* a somewhat more highbrow afternoon paper, has been bold, by Singapore standards, in presenting lively discussion. A three-part series by Jackie Sam, a *New Nation* journalist and PAP member, raised some delicate questions over the government's censorship of movies and songs. The *New Nation* also ran a review of the film *Woodstock,* which was banned in Singapore but not in neighboring Malaysia, and could be seen by simply crossing the bridge into Malaysia.

The *Singapore Herald* incident probably reveals pettiness as much as anything else. The *Herald* irked the government from the very beginning, mostly for minor reasons. It took photos of preparations for the Republic Day parade in 1970 when the government had asked the press not to publish any—even though the preparations were taking place right downtown, in full public view. During the Commonwealth Ministers conference, which took place in Singapore at the beginning of the year, it referred to the ceremonial garb worn by the Prime Minister of Tonga as a "maxi-skirt." In a somewhat more serious vein, the *Herald* did have a somewhat more lively letters column than other papers, and it did print one story, against specific government orders, about a young New Left sociologist, living in Singapore but traveling on an American passport, who was refused reentry after leaving the country for a few weeks.

The final thing one should note about Singapore's semi-free press is that by and large it has few of the features we associate with a controlled press. It prints little or no government propaganda. It maintains complete coverage of world news, including developments in Communist China. The press is managed, but it would often be hard to tell.

Still, there are times when the atmosphere of mobilization in Singapore *almost* resembles that in a totalitarian state. Lee's constant hocus-pocus of slogans—"Make Singapore A Garden City," "Keep Singapore Clean and Pollution-Free," "Make Singapore Clean and Mosquito-Free," is echoed in an island-wide orchestration. Recently the government has begun a "Brush Your Teeth" campaign, and admonitions appear every few minutes on television.

Generally, however, the mood is relaxed. Despite the government's talk against the "hippie danger," one sees more long hair in Singapore than anywhere else in Asia, except perhaps Japan. Despite some puritanism (*Playboy* is banned, for example), the number of young couples holding hands or embracing in the parks is far larger than anywhere else in the region. There was a tempest in a teapot when the press reported that a Singapore professor had recommended that boys commit

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"self-abuse" eight times before going out on a date. A Jesuit priest denounced the professor, who then responded tongue-in-cheek that he had been maligned: he had never said "commit self-abuse," but "masturbate," and seven times would be quite sufficient. Furthermore, Singapore is, as far as I know, the only city in Asia with a police-tolerated street where homosexuals congregate. Given the sexual puritanism that reigns throughout Asia, all this is a sign of freedom.

The government tries to impose its own vision of life, though often only half-heartedly. It has "detained" a series of rock songs for encouraging drug use. But, as the *New Nation* explains, "Legally, none of the drug-rock records are banned. They have been barred from coming in because the lyrics are objectionable. Possession of records with these lyrics is not an offense, but the law does require you to surrender them to the police. But no objection has been taken to the music, so you can keep those records without the lyrics."

The government's campaign against long hair has been on similar lines. At the beginning of the year it sent a memorandum to businessmen stating that

> "Long, dirty, scruffy hair is coming back. It is easy to slide down the slippery slope—long hair, hippie clothes and medallions, pop music glorifying drugs and sex. Decisive action is therefore being taken to curb development of this unhealthy trend. . . . Heads of departments will instruct their counter officers to serve male members of the public with long hair last, causing them the most inconvenience.

But the bark has simply been much worse than the bite.

SOCIALISTS HAVE LONG BEEN OPPOSED to those who scant the importance of pluralistic institutions in the Third World. It is instructive to observe the Singapore case to see what effect—beyond the obvious one of reducing individual expression—the limits on democracy have had on its economic and social climate.

The economic and social accomplishments of the PAP regime are extremely impressive. Even Singapore's survival is an accomplishment: when the British announced the phase-out of their base in 1967, there was already serious unemployment—and the base was providing about 20 percent of the jobs in Singapore. The government has managed to get unemployment down from 10 percent to 4 percent during those four years by an aggressive industrial policy that has mixed a foreign investment boom with a significant growth in government and government-private domestic companies. Singapore's real GNP has now been growing by about 10 percent a year for the last few years—one of the highest growth rates in Asia. Per capita income is now up (according to government figures, which are alleged to be somewhat exaggerated) to $900, a figure higher than Japan's only five or six years ago.

Fully half of the new industrial investment came from foreign sources, and the government attracted it with a series of tax incentives and other benefits. No one but a dogmatist would question the decision to encourage manufacturing investment to bring jobs as well as technology to Singapore. (Even the Soviet Union welcomed foreign investment during the twenties.) Also, I think that an examination of the tax incentives offered (tax holidays and temporary tax reductions) would indicate that they were probably justified. Somewhat more questionable are some of the trade union restrictions the PAP government adopted in 1967 and 1968 in order to make the "investment climate" hospitable. These laws made strikes rather difficult, although not illegal. They required the negotiation of lengthy three-year contracts and limited the amount of annual bonus for which a union could bargain to one month's pay. As a result, wages have been rising in Singapore at a rate considerably smaller than the growth rate of the economy.

I do not doubt that the PAP leaders put these restrictions on labor only because they felt it was necessary to deal with an unemployment crisis that would face the country if investment didn't come in. That they are not out needlessly to feather foreign capitalists' nests comes out clearly from the changes in the government's policies toward incentives to foreign investors over the years. As many foreign firms came in, the government became much tougher in negotiations. Where it once wanted labor-intensive firms like electronics companies, it now wants technology-intensive companies that will train young Singaporeans. The tax incentives are going down, often disappearing. PAP knows what kind of investment it wants,

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and now that it can pick and choose, it is doing just that.

One wonders whether PAP might have done as well in encouraging investment, without having to let wages lag behind—*if* it had to listen to workers as well as to businessmen. Businessmen are known for talking big, and they surely welcomed the restrictions put on labor. The question is whether they would not have to come to Singapore anyway.

Government achievements in housing and urban planning are again to be marveled at. The construction of public housing was Singapore's first great social accomplishment, and since 1960 over 100,000 units have been built, now holding over one-third the population. By 1980 about half the people, it is planned, will live in public housing. Subsidies for housing benefit most the lowest-income groups. One- and two-room flats are subsidized, while three-room apartments pay their way and four-room dwellings are rented out at a profit. Since 1964 the government has encouraged a scheme by which people can purchase their flats, and about one third are now owned by the people who live in them.

With time, the quality of the housing has improved dramatically, and the new satellite towns coming up—Toa Payoh and Queenstown —are comparable in imaginativeness to the best of West European town planning.

By and large, the urban renewal program has avoided the pitfalls of urban renewal in the West. There have been no complaints of excessively high prices paid to landowners of property to be developed—indeed, the complaints have been the other way. Nor are slums replaced simply by office buildings. Housing on the site is usually built for those displaced by the clearance.

In such areas the government's policies are largely unfaultable. Public health standards are unbelievably high in Singapore, a difficult task considering the multitude of small-scale street stalls selling food and drink. One can safely drink the water from Singapore taps—something that Soviet authorities advise the tourist is undesirable in their country. Singapore standards of hospital care compare with those in Europe or America, and there is socialized medicine. Within 10 years the birth rate has been reduced from 4.2 percent a year, one of the very highest in the world, to 1.5 percent. This spectacular achievement was brought about partly through economic prosperity and partly through a no-nonsense disincentive program under which costs of delivering a baby begin to skyrocket with the third one, and maternal social benefits are reduced.

WHITHER SINGAPORE after Lee's tussle with the press? There are some signs of a crackdown, but more point to a gradual democratization of policy. The Barisan is now increasingly isolated, and much less of a threat. This is partly because of a shift in educational preference of parents. Singapore parents can choose to send their children to English, Chinese, Malay, or Tamil streams of instruction in school. In 1960, 70 percent of the parents sent their children to the Chinese; in 1970, 70 percent sent kids to the English stream.

Meanwhile, a moderate left-wing opposition party, the People's Front, has recently formed under the leadership of Lui Boon Poh. Lui is a labor lawyer who has defended some opposition unionists in a shipyard workers' union which recently threw out its leadership by a democratic vote. While it's hard to say how strong Lui's party might become, it should serve as a catalyst of labor discontent. Union leaders like Devan Nair have made threatening noises that wages will soon have to start rising faster, or else. A few strikes, sanctioned behind the scenes by the government, will help things along. The unions also plan, on the Scandinavian model, to go into consumer cooperatives in the near future.

When pressed about Singapore's deviations from democracy, honest government officials habitually cite two factors in their defense. One is Singapore's precarious position as a small, predominantly Chinese state with no natural resources and surrounded by poorer Malays. "We can't afford to make mistakes, because our survival is at stake." A second is that Chinese traditionally distrust all governments and that it takes time for the trust to be built up. In the long run, one feels, responsive government policies are the best assurance of stability, growth, and survival. And socialists, who are stern about the lapses from democracy in countries governed by political opponents, have an obligation to be at least as stern in relation to their friends.

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Henry Pachter

The New Shape of Foreign Policy

LET US ASSUME that at some time during the seventies the United States will have withdrawn the last GI from Vietnam, that other GIs are preparing to leave Germany and Japan, that Taiwan is again Chinese, Okinawa Japanese, and most other overseas bases either have been abandoned or are under heavy political fire; that the NATO command is in the process of being dismantled, SEATO and CENTO have been shelved; that most American assets abroad have been nationalized or repatriated, and the United States has discontinued most of its foreign aid operations. Let us also assume that all countries that have not yet done so will have established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic, and even the German Democratic Republic, recognizing thereby the Communists' conquests of 1939–49.

Some may find this picture shocking; but on reflection it is consistent with expectations most of us thought realistic back in 1945—with the exception that few expected Mao to win all of China. At that time, long before we invested $100 billion abroad and acquired garrison rights in overseas countries, many thought we were entering "an American century." Technologically, politically, and economically, perhaps even morally and artistically, we felt superior to the Russians.

But what appeared as the foundation of a bright future now seems difficult to accept as the result of 25 years' contestation. In politics as in personal life, "you can't go home again" is a truism painful to admit. Not only has 25 years' experience made us wiser; unforeseen forces have become visible in the meantime, and the old starting point may not actually be what we thought it was. Those who blame all our woes on the mistake of ever having left that position certainly have no sense of history; those who imagine that we need only go back to the illusions of 1945 for everything to be all right have not understood what has happened in these 25 years.

Nor is it sufficient to criticize specific errors such as a certain formulation of the Truman Doctrine, an excessive reliance on nuclear power, the conclusion of alliances, and other measures of the "Cold War." All these were attempts to cope with the main but unforeseen postwar problem: the militancy of revisionism. To be a have-not country is not something that can be defined by statistics; it is a state of mind. For historical reasons a nation may seek its identity in rivaling, surpassing, getting even with certain others. The revolutionary nationalism that developed after the post-World War II liberation may be unhealthy, immature and easy to belittle as mere "resentment"; but it will not come to rest before it has put the old ruling powers in their place. Not even the benevolent leadership that many conceived as America's role in this world of rising expectations is to be tolerated.

America's plan had been to fulfill and even to raise the economic expectations, while containing the political dynamics, of revolutionary nationalism. To the new nations,

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however, rising political influence matters more than social and economic gains. In this respect the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic are still new and unsatiated nations and act as the leaders of all other revisionist powers. The combination of Russian imperialism, intent on surpassing the Americans, with revolutionary nationalists who have accounts to settle with all Western powers has unsettled the old power equations. The resulting dynamism continues to negate any new equilibrium in the world.

This is the main reason why the United States cannot simply go back to zero commitment. The security of many countries is based on the assumption that the United States cannot tolerate its impairment without jeopardizing its own security. We may retreat from positions we never planned to be permanent, which we had occupied precipitously to meet a special emergency, or which proved to be untenable; but that does not imply a renunciation of all involvement. The universe in which we live is different from the one we imagined in 1945; but we still have to seek influence and mutual relationships in this universe, and the greatest error would be to envisage a new isolationism as a return to America's "natural" attitude after a spree of misconceived "globalism." We cannot "return" to isolationism, because we never were isolationist in the sense of being "detached from world affairs." The alternative between isolationism and interventionism is a false one, as will be shown later, and the meaningful choices will be discussed at the end of the paper.

II

FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS Americans have viewed their foreign policy in the light of a myth. Originally founded to provide a haven from the quarrels of Old Europe, so we were told, this country had little foreign involvements for 100 years and more. Fairly recently Woodrow Wilson aroused its sense of global responsibility. But after a brief spurt of internationalism, we relapsed into our natural stance—isolationism; then two unforeseen events precipitated us into "globalism." First, Hitler and Tojo forced us to intervene again. After V–Day, we might once more have retreated from world politics, had not Stalin's shadow, hovering ominously over Europe, stirred our conscience: this time for good, we recognized our duty to shoulder our share of the burden to preserve international peace. A textbook widely used only 10 years ago, and aptly entitled *The Revolution in American Foreign Policy,* told of our late conversion to "collective security." In this view, George Washington had committed the country to abstentionism in foreign policy,[1] but in the 150 years since his Farewell Address the world has shrunk and our conscience has been sharpened. The new state of the world requires our help to keep its joints together. While liberals hailed and conservatives deplored this turn toward the "One World" concept, both sides agreed that our fall from the paradise of innocent isolation had occurred at some time in the forties.

Any discussion of America's future policy must start with a repudiation of this isolationist myth. The obvious conclusion from this outline of history is: with Stalin gone, the dangers of the Cold War situation have receded; hence we may once again safely relegate power politics to second place, confident that people abroad know now that we would again rush into any breach in case of emergency. America's interventions abroad have indeed given the impression of being

[1] Incidentally, the Farewell Address is consistently misquoted. The first president did not warn against "entangling alliances" but against "permanent alliances," and for that he had good reason: in concluding the alliance with France he had neglected to set a term for renewal, and he was anxious to correct this violation of an elementary rule of diplomacy. Two years later, the United States broke the alliance, and then Jefferson did speak contemptuously of "entangling alliances"—only to exclaim, another two years later, that "we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation." The first presidents started the bad habit of their successors: to justify opportunistic policies by invoking *principles* manufactured for the occasion.

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ad hoc precipitous actions, often decided in the nick of time to prevent great disaster. We never conveived of our role as that of "the world's policeman," [2] but perhaps as its fire brigade.

Yet this picture is not quite correct. While the means and the intensity of our involvement have changed from time to time, the Republic has followed, from its earliest days to the present, a balance-of-power policy, never allowing any one nation to dominate either Europe or Asia. The country, far from being dedicated to pacifism, has always vigorously defended what it considered its "neutrality" in European affairs—but with two provisos, the first of which was spelled out 50 years after Washington's Farewell Address by William H. Trescott, a conservative Democrat from South Carolina: "Wherever the changes among European powers are such as to modify the respective weights of their colonial empires, we are directly interested in the resulting balance of powers." The other proviso was that America must secure for herself freedom of action in its own hemisphere. Isolationisim was merely the other side of continental imperialism and, right down to the beginning of World War I, it was consistent with interventions in this hemisphere, in Africa, Asia, and Polynesia, and even with the acquisition of colonies. Perry "opened Nippon," Beveridge and Josiah Strong hailed the Anglo-Saxons' "destiny"—a term beloved by Hitler, too. Again, isolationists who fought America's entry into the European War in 1914 were imperialists for the Pacific area—with few honorable exceptions, such as Norman Thomas. Senator Taft felt at the time that we were in the wrong war, and later he attacked Truman for "losing China" and for concluding an armistice in Korea. The isolationism of the forties and fifties was actually nothing but anti-Europeanism; more recent writers who were tarnished with the "neoisolationist" epithet have rightly repudiated any connection with the earlier breed. They should more properly be called anti-interventionists.

Even so cursory a survey reveals that we did not pass from a state of introverted innocence to an eruption of exuberant expansionism in this century, and there is little substance to the prediction that, after the shattering experience of Vietnam, we might "return" to the earlier mood of humility. Apart from the fact that innocence, once lost, cannot be recovered, this country has never displayed any particular taste for Hegelian triads, and its foreign policy has been informed by need and opportunity rather than metaphysics. Like any other country, we have had periods of more intensive activism and periods of relative inactivity or retrenchment. Weakness suggested a defensive attitude during the Civil War. Yet even in periods when the official philosophy was isolationist, as under Herbert Hoover, we did not turn our face away from Europe, but were one of the principals in the quest for disarmament and for a solution of the reparations question.

It is true, however, that new policies always have to be "sold" to the American people by invoking ideologies. As other nations had their crusades, we have fought the uncivilized Indians and the overcivilized English, the absolutist Queen of Spain and the Bolshevist Russians, the wild Asiatics and the sophisticated Europeans. Whenever such a crusading ideology lost its usefulness, the people and its policy-makers found it difficult to switch signals at the right moment. The danger of overshooting the mark had to be countered by a counterideology of "isolationism." Thinkers who just wanted us to mark time had to propagate retrenchment. People who saw no point in pressing on Europe our own conception of the millennium had to profess a deep disappointment over our inability to fire others with our own messianism.

[2] I have not been able to find this claim in any Administration source, but only as a charge in the mouth of opponents. The average American probably saw his government's interventions in world affairs in the light of Gary Cooper's role in *High Noon*.

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Many innocents had indeed experienced this disappointment. Having supported the crusading policy in the honest belief that its aim was a transcendent ideal, they felt utterly let down when they suddenly saw that no such aim was reached or even intended and that their dream could not be realized with the means employed. Having assumed that our foreign policy must be more beautiful than that of any other country, they were shocked to discover that it was just as ugly. But strangely, instead of blaming the realism of the actual policy, they blamed the idealism in which they had believed, and thereupon turned their back on all principles of foreign policy, especially that of collective security. Paradoxically, this disgust with foreign policy, or perhaps with all politics in the established framework, was now named "realism" or even by the German word *"Realpolitik."*

The ideological swings of the pendulum tend, therefore, to be wider than the swings in our actual foreign policy. A comparatively slight change in the pace of activism, a shift in the geographical direction of our concerns, an overhauling of the means and instruments used, any such alteration will be hailed or condemned as a fundamental change of ideological direction and basic philosophy, engendering enthusiasm or dejection. Whenever we are forced to intervene somewhere, those who say "we have to" find support from others who say "we ought to"; whenever we find our policies checked somewhere, those who admit that "we cannot" make it sound like "we must not." It is not surprising, therefore, that our failure in Vietnam should be accompanied by a resurgence of "isolationism" or "neoisolationism," whose representative speakers claim to be both more realistic and more idealistic than the proponents of the previous policy.

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III

THE TARGETS OF ISOLATIONIST—or revisionist [3]—criticism are both the means and the philosophy of America's political behavior in these last 30 years, as well as its two kinds of agents, the liberal internationalists and the military nationalists. The protesters charge that our policy was shaped by the Pentagon, yet the realists deplore that it was conceived without due regard to our military capabilities. And some see our interventions abroad as dictated by sinister business interests, others as the work of doctrinaire fanatics and the outflow of liberal idealism. We shall divide the charges into two categories: those directed against the ideology of internationalism or collective security, and those directed against the practice of interventions, which often is elevated to an alleged philosophy of "interventionism."

As for the latter, there is no such thing. There have been interventions, sometimes appropriate and often ill-considered, though usually engaged in with great reluctance and after due agonizing. There may be greater disposition to intervene on the part of some policy-makers than of others; but there is no "interventionism" from which flow the in-

[3] The word "revisionism" is used here, of course, in a sense different from that on p. 435. There it described countries that feel the present distribution of power in the world gives them less influence than is their due. Here it describes critics of the conventional views on U.S. interventions in World Wars I and II, the Korean war and the Cold War. It is sheer accident that these critics also identify themselves with Third World revisionism.

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dividual interventions as milk flows from the cow or as fantasies about secret conclaves flow from the fertile imagination of extremist politicians. Yet there is no denying that in the past 30 years we have intervened directly with American might where it would have been preferable to work through proxies or to allow the dust to settle of its own accord. Where we have adopted the latter course (as in China), we have done so with so little gracefulness that a hidden impatience to intervene seemed to shine through the apparent abstentionism. Having gained the valuable, if costly, experience of interventions that backfired, our future policy-makers probably will go through more prolonged agonizing sessions before they engage in another direct intervention; but they are unlikely to discard and foreswear this instrument of foreign policy. They will always try, as they have done before, to prompt international organizations, such as the OAS and the UN, into necessary actions or, like a good judo fighter, if they are clever enough they will incite two of our enemies to fight each other rather than do it themselves.

But in the last resort a nation's power is not believable, and therefore is ineffective, without a minimum preparedness to use it in an emergency. The Guam Doctrine—so-called, though it really says nothing a student would not learn in his first semester at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy—does not renounce force and does not abandon intervention as a means of U.S. foreign policy. It merely assures the Asian nations of our continued support and assigns to the U.S. forces a standby role of last resort instead of the front-line role they have played in Korea and Vietnam. (If there was any doubt about the meaning of the Guam Doctrine, Nixon resolved it in Cambodia.) Likewise, when Senator Fulbright untiringly assures us that "the most powerful nation in the world" need not use its power to see it respected, he actually is concerned with appearances and methods rather than with the essence of the problem of power. He is getting undeserved laurels for seeming to say that power need not be wielded. Neither he nor other "neo-isolationists" like Kennan or Lippmann or Morgenthau say that. They merely disagree with the Administration (and among themselves) on the place where and the time when to use U.S. power—and as we shall see, there is a good chance that the Administration will adopt more of their advice, even though it may not say so either.

The critics would like to extricate U.S. power from undesirable involvements regardless of the consequences for our local protégés. Nixon would like to extricate us with as little damage as possible to these clients. The difference may be significant but it is one of judgment (specifically as to the value of those clients and of promises made to them) rather than of basic attitudes. Even Dean Rusk, the former secretary of state who is the neoisolationists' *bête noire,* would agree that one must not make promises one cannot keep; he scored before a hostile Senate Foreign Affairs Committee by boasting that "this Administration has not undertaken a single new commitment." The real question is whether the United States should be committed to the defense of other nations or should wait and withhold intervention until it perceives a clear and present danger to its own interests. Here Rusk, with Kennedy, Roosevelt, Acheson, and Stevenson, stands on one side; Nixon with his senatorial and professorial critics on the other side. The latter feel that this nation should stick to its own business; the former hold that other nations' independence is our business. Therefore they have been called, not quite accurately, internationalists or even, derisively, globalists. More appropriately, they might be called collectivists or equilibrists, since in the late forties they committed the United States to the defense of a certain status quo which seemed to them to keep world affairs in a state of perfect balance.[4]

[4] This may imply the obligation to keep promises one did not make. Dean Rusk said on August 25, 1966: "No would-be aggressor should suppose that

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If an association of independent states was to counterbalance Soviet power and its ideological-political dynamism, they had to develop a spirit of group solidarity. Collective security was to be understood, not as a series of individual commitments, but as the readiness of all to prevent any change in the relations of international power anywhere and by whomsoever.[5] This, after all, was the lesson these men had learned in the thirties: failure to repel the first aggression eventually resulted in world war. The antifascist origins of the insight seemed to make it a slogan of the Left, and internationalism part of the liberal ideology. It also is true that, to realize such a policy of solidarity, one had to have that generosity which is characteristic of left-wing politics: for instance, one had to spend money for development aid and identify with people of other races.

Nevertheless, it is erroneous to treat the idea of collective security as a liberal ideology. Today, when Acheson, Lilienthal, and George Marshall are being denounced by revisionists of the Left, one remembers with a smile that in their own day they were denounced by the Right as Communists or protectors of Communists. In reality, they were internationalists because internationalism was a practical idea. Their apparent idealism rested on a solid foundation of enlightened interest. Their ideology of global responsibility—though propounded with the righteousness of liberal activism—served as a cover for the policy of containment which, besides saving Europe from Russification, also established an American hegemony in the Atlantic community. Far from being starry-eyed philanthropy, that policy clearly was consistent with the long-range economic interests of the United States.

Moreover, it merely continued a trend that had been apparent in our policies for over 50 years. An increasing involvement in "world politics" had become inevitable; since two powers, allied by ideology and treaty, threatened to dominate both Europe and Asia in the thirties, the United States had to provide the balance. Not only noblesse, bigness too, obligates, as George Washington had foreseen. But then, the policy was conceived as one of alliance. It was not until after the victory over fascism—that most virulent kind of chauvinism—that the idea of a "world order" or of "collective security" took hold.

SUCH A WORLD ORDER can be conceived in several forms:

(*1*) as "concert of powers": In 18th- and 19th-century Europe, the "concert" of England, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Prussia-Germany guaranteed to each nation that none of them should gain preponderance; after 1945 the UN Security Council was constructed as such a "concert" where England, France, China, the U.S.S.R., and the U.S.A. were to sustain and contain each other. It is silly to blame "lack of unity" for the failure of a body that was created as a bargaining table, a place not to dispense justice but to distribute power. The system failed, not because the powers were divided

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the absence of a defense treaty . . . grants immunity to aggression." The full speech is the most extreme statement of the philosophical rationale of unilateral intervention: even in the absence of an explicit mandate, this argument runs, the United States must act as though it had received one. For according to Kant's categorical imperative, each of us must act in accordance with a maxim that could be the maxim for the conduct of all others; and this must apply to foreign ministers as to other mortals.

[5] In his popular book, *A New Foreign Policy for the United States* (New York: Praeger, 1969), Hans Morgenthau charges that we defend the status quo not only with respect to the international distribution of power, but in the social constitutions of overseas countries, too. This is neither true nor necessary. We have imposed reforms on Japan and Formosa; we urged them on Diem; we even offered to finance Castro's agrarian reform. The Alianza para el Progreso was especially designed to force beneficiary countries to institute reforms. I agree that, had we gone farther in that direction, we would have lost the support of the parasitic classes in Latin America. But I deny that it was logical for us to support Nasser, Papadopoulos, Somoza, Thieu, etc. Of all revisionists, George Kennan alone had the courage to carry isolationism to its logically mad conclusion; he has argued that we must take a business-as-usual attitude to Ian Smith and Vorster.

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but because the three first-named powers were not strong enough to bargain. Hence we were left with—

(*2*) the bi-polar system: Two super-powers stood at the head of two alliance systems, again sustaining and containing each other while fighting over influence among the uncommitted. Their rivalry was seen as either "cold war" or as "coexistence." In the next section, I shall briefly indicate how this system broke down. The question is whether it will resolve itself into

(*3*) polycentrism (which is to be discussed later), or

(*4*) multi-isolationism, the utopia that each country can withdraw into its shell and leave the others in peace. The conditions of success for such a multi-isolationist system are manifold: to prevent the big from swallowing the small countries, large units should be broken up and no state should be larger than, say, Massachusetts. At the same time, in order to survive, these smaller units must surrender much of their sovereignty to regional planning boards. There would have to be rapid retreat not only from national policies but from national ideologies. In short, the present big and small states are utterly unsuitable for such an experiment; they cannot help getting involved in other nations' affairs and they are not prepared to give up, nay they wish to increase, their national sovereignties and identities.

(*5*) Another way of overcoming sovereignty would be the gradual enlargement of certain essential services the UN is now offering on an almost eleemosynary basis: regional planning, investment aid, health care, ecological surveys, energy supply, transportation policies and, above all, the establishment of a body of international law governing the various encounters between nations, formation of an international civil service, etc. The rudimentary form of all these services does not allow any hope that during the seventies they will generate authorities to which the nations might bow.

To put it bluntly, there is no system of collective security in sight, and there never was one either in the old League of Nations or in the present United Nations. In both cases the ideology of collective security was debased to provide legal cover for the protection of big-power interests.

This is even more true of regional arrangements such as the Organization of American States, which for most of its life was a screen for U.S. hegemony in this area, or the Warsaw Pact, which permits Soviet intervention in other countries. A new version of such false "security" arrangements is the Soviet proposal to convene a "European Security Conference"—a device to sever Western Europe from the United States. The Europeans are indeed eager to conclude special security treaties with the Soviet Union, provided that security is guaranteed by the United States. The model for this procedure is found in the Locarno Treaty of 1925 when England guaranteed the Rhine frontier. Likewise, it has now been recognized that peace in the Middle East will require the guarantees of all the big powers concerned.

We have here an interesting reversal of previous U.S. positions. At the time of the Baghdad Pact, Mr. Dulles tried to keep the U.S.S.R. out of the region; now, after the Kremlin has shown that no peace is possible there without its specific consent, we are interested in making the U.S.S.R. shoulder its responsibilities. We are returning to the insight of liberal internationalists, at the end of World War II, that the organization of peace requires the involvement of all the big powers. It was for this reason that FDR was so anxious to secure Stalin's adherence to the United Nations.

IV

THE IDEOLOGY OF INTERNATIONALISM ruled for 25 years, though it was not always matched by practice.[6] It came to grief, not

[6] It was not liberal, for it required us to support regimes no liberal would touch with a pole; nor was it consistently anti-Communist, as Acheson's

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because people changed their minds about the merits of its underlying principles but when the policy associated with it in Vietnam proved unsuccessful. Opportunistic as we are, we did not react to the shock by inquiring into the specific causes of the disaster but by jumping to the conclusion: internationalism has failed, interventionism has failed.[7]

The ensuing debate has had all the earmarks of a conversation in an insane asylum, with each participant answering to a fourth person the question that a second had asked of a third, while addressing a fifth. The liberals used the idealistic language of collective security to defend military policies they might have attacked under different circumstances; the conservatives found themselves in the company of radicals who claimed to be guarding the tabernacle of traditional neutrality in foreign affairs. The opportunistic policy of shoring up friendly governments of whatever description was denounced as the bastard child of an ideological preconception and defended as a service to "democracy." On the other hand, the preconception that the United States must not commit itself to collective arrangements of mutual security was given out as *"Realpolitik."* The standoff that in Europe clearly had been accepted by both sides was not greeted with relief but vilified as "cold war," while Soviet invasions and proxy wars came under the heading of "coexistence."

The debate also led to new and strange kinds of polarization. The liberal internationalists, whose original concern had been with organizing world peace, now modified their homegrown faith in legalized collective action to maintain that the United States had an implicit mandate to police the status quo. The critics of such various police operations, by contrast, all too soon came to question America's right or duty to engage in any peace-keeping venture outside its proper defense perimeter. Having rejected NATO, they felt obliged to disapprove of America's entry into World War I and World War II. Historical revisionism—a legitimate reconsideration of past policies in the light of new information—degenerated into a self-lacerating ritual of purging America of its "arrogance of power."

The military debacle of Vietnam and the moral debacle of Santo Domingo have in this country tipped the balance of articulate opinion toward revisionism in its extreme form. Americans who formerly thought that "the most powerful nation" could do *everything* now find that the price of doing *anything* is too high. They can think of hardly any provocation, short of an actual attack on the United States itself, against which the use of U.S. power might be justified.[8] They are not sure that we either should or can protect Israel, and they are anxious to extricate from Berlin the 10,000 American sol-

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treatment of Yugoslavia and Dulles's treatment of the Hungarian revolution showed. Even Dean Rusk, as secretary of state, was always at pains to point out that "there are many kinds of Communism." A speech of 1951, often quoted to the contrary, was not a policy paper but a pure propaganda harangue.

[7] This failure is often misunderstood. It is said, for instance, that we were "overextended" and had no "vital interest" in a country "5,000 miles away." Now France was only 500 miles away from Algeria and certainly had "vital" interests to defend there. On the other hand, our interests are "vital" in Berlin and in Israel, though these places also are thousands of miles away. The limitations of Western powers in the Third World are not logistical but political, inasmuch as guerrillas are always able to resume any fight they appear to have given up: as long as they don't lose totally, they win. Failure in Vietnam discloses not any "limits of U.S. power" in state-to-state relations but the different abilities to take punishment, on the one hand, of a professional army and, on the other hand, of fanatical kamikaze fighters. Perhaps this fanaticism is best mobilized when the war is also racial: the Czechs are no less devoted to freedom than the Vietcong but they do not wish to destroy their own country.

[8] The issue was joined in May 1967, when the shipping rights of a democratic country and of all other countries, including the United States, were being attacked by a willful dictator who also was waging war in Yemen. But precisely those who previously had complained that "we always support dictators" now came to Nasser's aid by denouncing any action we might have taken to prevent the outbreak of a war for which he professed to lust.

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diers whom the Germans hold there as hostages for the safety of their former capital. Senator Mansfield thinks that now or soon the six U.S. divisions can be brought home from Europe, so that NATO can be transformed into a purely political alliance. We would then have the choice of not rescuing Europe a third time, or of limiting our guarantee to certain countries. If some Europeans still think that the American troops in Germany serve as a trip wire to unleash instant massive retaliation in case of a Russian attack, very few Americans today are likely to agree that this is a realistic assumption. Just as French opponents of collective security at the end of the thirties did not want to "die for Danzig," it is equally true that Americans do not want to die for Berlin or Jerusalem.

LIKE MOST GREAT debates in history, however, the battle between American globalists and isolationists is not being resolved by either party's victory but has been brushed aside by the events. It no longer matters whether Americans do or do not agree to intervene on behalf of their clients in other parts of the globe. The clients no longer wish to be rescued by us if rescue means all the things we are doing in Vietnam. The strongest argument for Americanization of the Vietnamese war (in fact the only argument that seemed realistic in the framework of cold-war thinking) held that the U.S. guarantees for Berlin and other threatened places might lose their credibility unless we made good on our promises to our Vietnamese clients. But since "Vietnamization" of that war has become our official policy, it is doubtful whether in the future we shall find many who wish to be protected by our guarantee. By now they suspect that our suggestions of "flexible response" to possible Soviet agression amounts to nothing but "Europeanization" of the war. This is at the bottom of our difficulties in NATO: our allies don't wish to fight our wars on their soil; they would prefer a strategy requiring instant exchanges of nuclear rockets between the Soviet Union and the United States. Reviewing his options for the seventies, Willy Brandt understandably concluded that it would be wiser for him to seek an accommodation with the Soviet Union. Even before we have abandoned the role of protector, we are running out of nations that wish to be protected.

The case for retrenchment, therefore, no longer rests on purely ideological grounds and does not even have to rely on the argument that interventions do not serve our best interests; in the near future it will be based on the fact that we have not been invited to intervene and that other nations will place their trust in their own diplomatic agility rather than in our promise to help them. Having failed to obtain a fair peace for Israel, we need not wonder why so few small nations find it necessary to vote our way in the United Nations Assembly.

This development is consistent with two trends that have become evident over the past 10 years: increasing nationalism of the de Gaullist type among our allies, and decreasing efficacy of the big deterrent in most current types of conflicts. The superpowers seem to have lost stature; they no longer enjoy absolute hegemony in their spheres of influence. Their superweapons are of little use in small wars and they cannot even overcome colonial rebellions. Atomic weapons are just threatening enough to provide an umbrella under which the small powers are able to conduct their own independent policies. De Gaulle saw that he did not need to pay for the umbrella by assuming reciprocal obligations; Germany is on the verge of emulating his example, which also opens Eastern markets to German industry. It is true, the Soviet Union's satellites have less freedom to stray from the fold; but they are straining at the leash, too. World politics is visibly moving away from the polarized, binomial model of the fifties and sixties, toward a more "polycentric"—an unfortunate coinage which seems to mean multicornered—or even chaotic model.

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Peace-keeping will be more difficult in such a universe of nations than under the Soviet-American "condominium," which kept the world divided but also kept its conflicts manageable for 25 years. Any circus clown knows that juggling is easier with two balls than with five. When there were only two superpowers, Khrushchev could confidently tell us: you watch your Germans, I'll watch mine. When the restraining hands of the hegemons are no longer steady in their respective orbits, small wars may be impossible to localize; conflicts may multiply as smaller countries find support in defying the presumptions of the big. Even if it wanted to, the Soviet Union now could not settle the Near-East conflict by offering the United States a reasonable proposal—not with China in the wings to shout betrayal in the halls of the Bandung countries. Even without China present, the United Nations General Assembly has become quite unruly—to the point of adopting resolutions it knows it cannot carry out. The time is gone when UN resolutions were respected at least in those areas where we had power. But even NATO resolutions are not necessarily carried out by all partners—except when they have been so carefully watered down as to be acceptable even to the most independent members.

V

SEEN IN THIS LIGHT, America's newly resurgent isolationism seems merely a reflection of the nationalism that is becoming the practical guide for every country's foreign policy. Global responsibilities were costly for the United States taxpayers and therefore at all times difficult to sell to Congress. But now hidebound nationalism is no longer confined to the backwoods constituencies; it finds eloquent advocates among the educated and wordly-wise who can show how little the U.S. has received in return for worrying over the fate of the world. Other nations' indifference to what the U.S. considers their best interest is cited as justification for our indifference to what they consider their business. Unrequited love and sour grapes provide the emotional underpinning for the return to a policy of cumulative disengagement: our retrenchment diminishes our partners' zeal, which in turn decreases our feeling of concern, etc.

The question is, how long can this process of disengagement be continued without creating utter chaos in the international balance of powers? It is very clear that there must be a point beyond which the United States cannot retreat without unsettling the equilibrium and endangering its safety. While theoretically it is not necessary that one side must win what the other side has abandoned, in practice the Soviet Union has pressed hard on the heels of the Western powers wherever their retreat left a vacuum. Smaller powers were not strong enough or not united enough to fill such vacuums; or if they thought they did, they have not been able to defend vital interests against Soviet encroachments. Some naive neutralists may have hoped that American retrenchment would result in everybody's retrenchment, as though good examples were as contagious in foreign affairs as they are supposedly in the nursery. Such expectations have been disappointed; practical isolationists of the Right have therefore concluded that retrenchment must be accompanied by even heavier armament and by constant preparedness to reenter the contested areas. This was the essence of Herbert Hoover's conception of "Fortress America," and it is no less topical today: paradoxically, the more seriously President Nixon takes his Guam Doctrine, the less conciliatory can he allow his negotiators to be in the SALT negotiaions. If America's border is to be the Continental Shelf, our military can have no strategy except "massive retaliation." [9] The

[9] American military doctrine states that the strategic equilibrium can be maintained only if the balance of forces is asymmetric: the defender always needs more power than the aggressor, who can concentrate his forces on a point of his selection. At first sight one should think that this need of defensive superiority diminishes as the United States disengages itself from overseas obligations. However, as the U.S. defense perimeter shrinks and limited engagements become less practicable, the

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price tag on this return to Eisenhower's strategy is said to be staggering.

Unfortunately, the paradox may even extend into another region. Proponents of retrenchment in foreign policy usually argue that our first business should be to "put our own house in order." But in practice we may find that retrenchment in foreign policy increases difficulties in domestic affairs, and just the opposite of the desired effect may result: more economic and financial controls, more burdensome defense expenditures, restriction of liberties or even a military dictatorship to meet the more stringent conditions of international political rivalry. Experience shows that the quality of liberty suffers when its area is restricted. Incidentally, this danger might be even greater for other nations; for of all countries the United States is least dependent on foreign markets and suppliers.

Under these conditions it is fair to predict that many who now are working hard to dismantle the alliances and to liquidate the Cold War will be even less happy under the new system of promiscuously antagonistic multi-isolationism. There are now five atomic powers, and a dozen more nations could become atomic powers at short notice. If once we had one enemy in the Kremlin, we shall now have any number of potential enemies the world over. Shall the unfreezing of the Cold War restore the old merry-go-round of diplomatic jealousies and rivalries? Is there really more safety in a fluid state of diplomacy than in a more structured order?

One hesitates to enumerate the problems that may still be unresolved at the end of the seventies or that may result in minor wars. Neither the Chinese nor the Russians are likely to abandon their respective claims to preeminence in the Communist world. The Vietnamese, united under the banner of Ho Chi Minh, might try to reassemble the Indochinese empire once owned by the French. India might have fallen apart; part of Pakistan might have joined Afghanistan. Japan will have restored—without military, through commercial conquest—her old Pacific empire. A savage war may be fought in Africa over the question of who should unite the continent. Arabs may fight among each other, or once again with Israel, with other powers backing either side. Soviet power will almost certainly continue its drive toward the Moslem areas south of its borders, into the oil-rich Arab countries and toward the Indian Ocean. Italy never agreed that Nice and Savoy are French departments; Yugoslavia and Austria did not acquiesce in Italy's possession of Trieste and South Tyrol. Nor can Pakistan forget Kashmir, etc. Germany divided will fill the air with laments over its frustrations, or united will be a danger to its neighbors. These sources of conflict are now visible; but the list of new conflicts that might arise during a decade must be much longer—and at least one of the contestants is likely to seek support from a big power.

Many conflicts will have no other reason than some megalomaniac's desire to assert the sovereignty of his country. Under the old system of bipolarity the big powers had a good chance to call such adventurers to order; but for a time now they have vied with each other in pressing the most sophisticated arms into the hands of wreckers of the peace. The temptation to enlarge such deliveries is great since the big powers are equipping their armies with more and more futuristic hardware and would not know how to dispose of the dated equipment if they could not hand it to beggars and bandits.[10]

Space does not permit here a discussion of

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fear of total war becomes once more a strong argument for heavy modern arms. Unless he holds that total unilateral disarmament is realistic, an advocate of retrenchment cannot readily oppose ABM, ULMS, FOB, and MIRV: the deterrent must be strong enough to make war impossible. For without room for "flexible response," a war, once it breaks out, can be neither stalled nor won. *Newsweek* quoted Mr. Laird as saying: "Our policy is based on preventing war, not planning to fight wars." Translated: there is no middle thing between deterrence and annihilation; the only weapons our generals have are those of total destruction.

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civil wars that might degenerate into confrontations between national powers. A diplomacy that merely aims at preventing the outbreak of war may find itself busily engaged in the affairs of seven continents, and in the absence of any rational system of collective security the job might be desperately difficult.

VI

THE PICTURE MAY NOT BE QUITE as chaotic as the notion of multi-isolationism suggests. There are countertrends, too. The big will grow more efficient, and at least some small ones will merge into larger units. The United States, let us hope, may overcome its present dissensions and once more be a stabilizing factor in world politics. We do not know what regime will govern in the Soviet Union, but we must assume, as it is technologically superior to China, that it will be the world's greatest power. With a larger population than the United States, it is bending all its energies and resources on the attainment of its strategic aims. As a legacy from its past, moreover, it still feels strong incentives to take the former colonial powers' place. It will strive for atomic superiority and try to expand its influence in the Third World—possibly even over some countries of Central Europe which today are officially neutral. Finally, there is no reason to doubt that sooner or later its systematic research efforts will lead to technological breakthroughs that will relegate the United States to second place. Though the Soviet Union still may lag in consumer goods for its population, it will be first by all measurements of power. Its saturation then may transform it from a destroyer into a defender of the status quo.

The Common Market will become a major power comparable to the United States and the Soviet Union—at least potentially, though it may be less ruthless in exploiting its capacity for political purposes. Through the accession of most countries now belonging to the Outer Seven, there may emerge a United States of Europe—U.S.Eu.—capable of holding its own between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, or of mediating between them. We may assume that this new unit will exercise a stabilizing influence after the lapse of NATO; though for some time the Soviet Union can forbid Austria to join, ultimately the United States of Europe may attract even Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia too.

Meanwhile, Japan is likely to emerge as a strong power center in East Asia. Her young leaders' nationalism and energy are ferocious forces that may compensate for her lack of numbers, space, and facilities. Japan may once more become the hegemon of the area it tried to make into its political empire in the thirties. Both the Soviet Union and China must watch this new rival, and as a result we shall have three triangles of power: in the East among Japan, China, and the U.S.S.R.; in the Pacific among the U.S., China, and Japan; in the West among the U.S., U.S.Eu., and the U.S.S.R.

There may emerge, during the seventies or eighties, a common market for South America and a political confederation of black Africa, perhaps also an Arab-Moslem community encompassing the former Ottoman Empire. Neither of them will have much political or industrial weight, but put together they may manage independently the resources that foreign masters were once able to monopolize. (I also assume that most U.S. property and assets abroad may be nationalized, after which friendly relations can prevail between the United States and the revolutionary juntas.)

At the end of the seventies, the United States will clearly not be "the most powerful nation in the world" but find itself as one of four more or less equal powers, with the prospect that two to five other such

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[10] An agreement to have a yearly bonfire of disposable arms should be the first desideratum for this decade.

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powers might emerge in the eighties. Of its former alliances (NATO, SEATO, CENTO) it may have retained the empty shells and some isolated clients (Israel? Australia?).

Nuclear weapons will continue to be the instruments of an arms race, but strategically they will be almost worthless since no nation can use them without bringing destruction upon itself. The nuclear weapons deter each other, but they do not deter an aggressor using conventional or political weapons.

Nevertheless, no one expects that the superpowers will renounce these weapons voluntarily. At best, the SALT talks might result in a stabilization of the present balance of terror—an agreement to add no further weapons of the ABM, MIRV, ULMS, FOB types to the present arsenal—perhaps a tightened test ban treaty prohibiting more experiments with newer weapons, and a tighter nonproliferation treaty restricting nuclear weapons to the present owners of such weapons. But even should, by good luck, some of the existing A-weapons be destroyed in the process, the remaining overkill would still be the multiple of anything that was thought tolerable in 1941.

We might then return to our previous assumption: if and when the Soviet leadership will be satisfied that they hold a slight superiority in arms and can consider their empire safe, then internal changes inside the Soviet society *might* permit the rise of a new leadership with a new perception of its place in the world. These new leaders might declare themselves saturated and stop the arms race (which, once more, does not mean to reverse it!), perhaps even allow some satellites to escape.

Until that time, ideological vectors and the dynamic factors in the structure of national-revolutionary states are likely to carry the Soviet Union and its allies toward expansionist policies. No matter what importance one may attribute to Communist and national-revolutionary ideologies as policy-inspiring factors, it is clear that a dynamic faith with a promise of world domination is a much stronger cement for any alliance than the merely defensive ideologies of the Western powers, which do not claim to be doing more than preserving an unsatisfactory status quo. Once such ideologies have been used and set in motion, they induce a dynamism in the behavior of their believers. Any have-not alliance includes junior members whose ramshackle governments must show successes in foreign policy, or at least stir up hate campaigns the major powers may be unable to control. The Brezhnev doctrine gives satellite leaders a hold on Soviet policies: by declaring himself a Leninist, Castro could force Khrushchev to stand by him. In the May 1971 treaty the U.S.S.R. recognized that the U.A.R. is "setting itself the aim of constructing its society along socialist lines."

Even if the Soviet Union and the United States were to enter into a tacit agreement to withdraw from areas of friction and to avoid confrontations, their respective clients would force them to remain watchful in world politics: Both are constantly involved in negotiations that concern the security of smaller nations and, by implication, their own. So are the other partners of this or that diplomatic and strategic triangle.

VII

THE SYSTEM DESCRIBED in the preceding section resembles the old model of the "concert"; it sustains itself through the mechanism of a mutual containment, but that same mechanism may destroy it. An unstable equilibrium is exposed to adjustments which may become necessary for any number of reasons—demographic, economic, ideological. But where there is need for change, there also are forces that resist and others that are impatient. Thus our collective security will be neither very secure nor very collective; the five powers which sustain and contain each other do not really act in "concert"; the term suggests some degree of harmony, but conceals their rivalry with each other. Yet, they are not completely in the "state

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of nature," which Hobbes said is the state of nations with respect to each other. They follow certain rules that keep the game of equilibrium going. But the condition of continuing the equilibrium is that the checks be effective, i.e., that each of the participating powers plays its role to the hilt, not shirking the risks others might be taking too. For the risk of not playing is usually greater than that of playing.

Previous examples of such an unstable concert are not too encouraging. A Frederick II might not play by the rules; a French Revolution might suspend the rules altogether; a Chamberlain might fumble the ball. While the system is not entirely chaotic, it is not self-adjusting and dependable. Its rules may be realized, as Marx said, like the law of gravitation when the house collapses on us. There is no permanent security within the system.

Radicals, therefore, will have to think of methods to break the vicious cycle. The easiest and most common suggestion of a remedy is to abolish foreign policy and to substitute public relations programs for the use and show of power. Proposals that amount to this are as naive as the wish that presidents should adopt only policies with which pacifists can live. We have seen that presidents get themselves elected on a no-war pledge only to find themselves forced to override their own promises and even their political interests. As a remedy to this, the obvious appeal must be to change "the system," which may be defined as either the capitalistic-imperialistic, or the military-industrial complex. But we see that the Soviet Union and China, neither of which is, whatever they may be, capitalistic by any classical definition, also engage in warlike policies against each other, and that in both countries it is not the military but the civilian leadership that fans the flames of their conflict. In his memoirs Khrushchev boasts that he himself ordered the missiles put into Cuba, not his generals. Likewise, the advice of U.S. generals has often been sober; they warned us not to get involved in any land war in Asia; the Korean war was "Truman's war" to its critics and the Indochina war is McNamara's or Bundy's or Johnson's war, but certainly neither General Westmoreland's nor General Abrams's war.[11]

When we specify "the system," we must conclude, therefore, that it is the power game itself, the rivalry of nations or what Lenin called "the system of states." Since there is little hope that states will be abolished within the next decade, the question is how to make this system, immoral as it may be, habitable for human beings—a task perhaps self-contradictory because the system that is built on nationalism in turn creates more nationalism. Created by conflict, it creates more conflict. No arrangements, pacts, organizations, or political conceptions can change these foundations unless the change has first occurred in the minds of people, in their attitude to their own nation, in their ability to understand our current problems as world problems. They must be overcome by institutions affecting the daily life of every nation—international boards dealing with the distribution of raw materials and the exploitation of energy sources, of traffic by sea and air, of money management, of health services and environmental conservation. As the interstate commerce clause in the U.S. Constitution has given the federal government powers transcending the states, so perhaps the nations can be transcended by regional development authorities and international agencies. The growth of such functional associations, it seems to me, would be the most meaningful development that can realistically be expected in the seventies.

I am not advocating world government or world economic planning, but the erosion of national governments and the supersession of national economic interests by inter-

[11] Nor is it Mr. Helms's war. The CIA has consistently warned Johnson against committing American troops in Vietnam, and I for one would not be surprised if one day we were to learn that some of the violent kinds of opposition to the war had secretly been fomented by the CIA.

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national boards. Recently, the development of multinational corporations has come under scholarly scrutiny, and it is clear that for international relations even more than in domestic affairs Reinhold Niebuhr's dictum (rephrased after Marx) is true: when private enterprise ceases to be private, it should become public. When national enterprises cease to concern only one nation, they ought to become international, at the same time that they become public, i.e., democratically controlled. I don't expect an early abolition of national authority, but I hope that the course of developments will render it irrelevant.

At the same time, socialists should encourage the growth and strengthening of subnational authorities and centers of power. This idea, made popular by the various youth movements in recent years, represents a decisive departure from previous efforts on the Left. So far, our ideas on foreign policy were addressed to national governments, and most efforts to curb the power of nationalism and militarism were based on the assumption that international agreements or international councils are able to impose transnational law upon reluctant national establishments. But whenever such laws were established, they left the national governments in as strong a position as before and free to break the agreements whenever they saw fit. The new idea is not incompatible with this approach but supplements it: it aims to weaken the national governments' ability to violate international law. It strengthens the people's ability to withhold cooperation or even enjoins them to resist a government that has violated international law. The so-called Nuremberg Law was faulty only because it was imposed by conquering governments, some of which did not have clean hands. The recent My Lai case, however, has returned the fundamental idea of this law to the people; in this instance, an increase in subnational power was simultaneously an increase in transnational law.

The complementary effects of subnational and transnational checks could be further enhanced if governments could be induced to sign an agreement on free international information or, as we might name it, cultural and moral disarmament. The proposal would oblige governments to disseminate each other's releases through the news media on a periodic and reciprocal basis, i.e., to publish, in the periodicals, the press, through radio and TV, maybe in the movies, the other side's point of view especially during negotiations, in litigation, or in case of conflict. Such information will not eliminate the causes of conflict but may prevent the escalation of its hostility. Likewise, disarmament will not eliminate the causes of the arms race, but may help to limit its course and its cost. In negotiating such agreements, governments so far have considered primarily the relationship of their respective forces and capabilities to hurt each other. Therefore, it did not seem very realistic for pacifists to exhort and implore them to disarm. The question is whether the development of international consciousness and of international organizations can create a situation where governments may have to revise their priorities.

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PS — *This essay was written some time ago. The President's new China policy obviously does not call for any changes here.*

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Andrew M. Greeley

"A Most Distressful Nation"

A Portrait of the American Irish

THE MOST OBVIOUS THING one can say about the American Irish is that every accusation that is made against more recent immigrant groups to the large cities was made against the Irish first. They were lazy, shiftless, dirty, savage (as early as the Revolutionary War there were considerable doubts as to whether you could trust an Irish soldier).

> The Irish soldiers abounded in our armies, and have fought in some of our battles; but sir, they have only fought as they were commanded, they have never led in any skirmish that I know of, and if they had known how to do anything but fight, they would never have been commanded to fight some of the battles that are the glory of our annals. It is vain for them or their friends to say anything of their patriotism and love of their adopted country—they needed the bounty and the pay and risked their lives for that.[1]

Irish convents were burned, Irish citizens were killed, an occasional Irish priest was martyred, and while they were tolerated on the American shore, the Irish certainly were not welcomed. In the words of Reverend William Alger:

> When this naked mass of unkept and priest-ridden degradation, bruised with abuse, festering with ignorance, inflamed with rancors, elated with blind expectations has sprung upon this continent . . . shall we . . . give this monstrous multitude instantaneous possession of every political prerogative, letting it storm our ballot-boxes with its drift of mad votes, and fill our offices with its unnaturalized fanatics?[2]

Nor did things improve as the nineteenth century went on and "Paddy" became a familiar cartoon figure, more gorilla than man, with a stovepipe hat, a jug of beer in one hand and a shillelagh in the other. *Harper's* took particular delight in publishing the ape cartoons and was fond of pointing out how criminal the Irish were.

> "They [the Irish] have so behaved themselves that nearly 75% of our criminals are Irish, that fully 75% of the crimes of violence committed among us are the work of Irishmen, that the system of universal suffrage in large cities has fallen into discredit through the incapacity of the Irish for self-government. . . ." The editor added that the Irish made terrible soldiers anyway, and he rebuked them harshly for not parading to honor the Prince.[3]

Irish revolutionary organizations such as the Finnians (bent on freeing Ireland) and the Mollie Maguires (bent on seizing control of the coal fields) were cited as evidence of

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[1] Sister Marie Leonore Fell, *The Foundations of Nativism in American Textbooks, 1783–1860* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1941), p. 170. I am grateful to Daniel Patrick Moynihan for bringing this passage to my attention.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

[3] Leonard Patrick O'Connor Wibberley, *The Coming of the Green* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1958), p. 49.

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the inhuman savagery of the Irish. The "five points" district in New York was not a safe place to walk through at night, or even, for that matter, in the middle of the day. The Irish volunteer fire associations usually spent more time fighting each other than putting out fires, and the bloody, vicious draft riots during the Civil War in New York City (which dwarf all urban violence since then) were basically a revolt of Irish rabble.

Daniel P. Moynihan has pointed out that while the Irish may not have been the largest immigrant group to American society, they were the largest proportion of any nation to emigrate. It would appear that between one-third and one-half of the Irish who were not buried by the British government in the potato famine of 1849 left the country to come to Canada or the United States. The conditions under which they migrated were perhaps better than those of the Middle Passage, but the conditions in which they had to live in the mid-nineteenth century American metropolis were far worse than virtually any American has to endure today. And there was little support from the elite classes for the plight of the Irish immigrant; but the Irish took it anyhow.

Much of the past is forgotten, and from the point of view of the present writer the most unfortunate part of it all is that the American Irish have lost the memory of the Finnians and the Mollie Maguires, the Regan Colts, the "five points," the draft riots, the ape with the booze and shillelagh, and even, and God forgive them for it, they have forgotten about Mr. Dooley.

HOWEVER DIFFICULT THE TRANSITION to American life proved to be for the Irish, and however much they were resented by their Anglo-Saxon predecessors to American shores, the Irish still came with two immense advantages over any other ethnic immigrant group: they spoke the language and they understood the political style. Indeed, from the point of view of the Protestant Ascendency, they understood the political style all too well, and in many large American cities the Irish promptly seized political control and have, in some instances, maintained it ever since.

Two tables adapted from the report of the Dillingham Commission give some evidence of what this advantage meant to the Irish.

TABLE 1

RETARDATION RATES AMONG CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN 30 AMERICAN CITIES IN 1910 BY ETHNICITY AND GENERATION

	Percent Retarded*
Native born	
White	28
Negro	67
Indian	48
Foreign born	
English	27
Irish	29
German	32
Hebrew German	32
Hebrew Russian	42
Italian-Northern	42
Italian-Southern	63
Polish	58

* *Two years or more older than normal for their grade. Adapted from Table 15, page 31,* Reports of the Immigration Commission: The Children of Immigrants in Schools. Vol. 1, *Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1911.*

TABLE 2

ANNUAL INCOME OF MALES 18 YEARS AND OLDER IN 1910 BY ETHNICITY AND GENERATION*

Native born of native parents		
White	$666	
Negro	445	
Native born of foreign born parents		Foreign born
English	586	$673
Irish	612	636
Italian-Northern	402	480
Italian-Southern	408	396
Polish	537	428
German	619	579
Hebrew	492	513

* Ibid., *Table 54, page 407.*

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The Irish were, first of all, at no greater educational disadvantage than English immigrants or native-born whites, and in terms of annual income they did almost as well as native-born whites and better than English immigrants. The Dillingham report, of course, was not based on the sophisticated probability-sampling methodology that is available to us today, so one cannot put absolute confidence in the materials presented in Tables 1 and 2; nevertheless, the tables do illustrate the initial advantages the Irish enjoyed.

Nor has that initial advantage been lost. According to data collected 50 years after the Dillingham Commission report in the mid-1960s, the Irish still enjoyed a substantial lead in education, occupational prestige, and family income over the other three principal Catholic immigrant groups. And the Irish advantage is not merely the result of the fact that they came earlier and have had more opportunities for education than other immigrant groups. For example, we observe in Table 4 that when generation and father's occupation and education are held constant, the gross differences in occupational prestige between the Irish and the other three Catholic immigrant groups are only somewhat modified. When not only father's occupation and education and generation are held constant, but also one's own educational achievement, the differences between the Irish and the Germans and the differences between the Irish and the Italians and the Poles decline, but still differences do remain. The point of this observation is not that the Irish enjoy any kind of cultural or biological superiority over the Germans, the Italians, and the Poles, but rather to stress that the advantage of being familiar with the language and the political system apparently persisted many long years after the immigrant experience was over.

A number of observers of the American Irish, such as William Shannon and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, have lamented the fact that the Irish have not made more of this advantage, that they have not in fact become

TABLE 3

DIFFERENCES AMONG CERTAIN AMERICAN MALES

Ethnic groups *	Irish	German	Italian	Poles
Mean years at school	12.98	11.60	11.20	11.25
Mean occupational prestige (1–100)	44.2	36.2	34.8	32.2
Mean family income	$8,530	$8,059	$8,159	$8,219
(Numbers of persons interviewed)	(138)	(153)	(182)	(80)

* *Father's main ethnic background.*

TABLE 4

DIFFERENCES IN OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE BETWEEN IRISH AND OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS

	German	Italian	Poles
Gross differences in prestige scores	8.0	9.4	12.2
Net differences when father's occupation and education, and generation are taken into account	6.4	8.6	13.8
Net differences when father's occupation and education, and generation and own education are taken into account	— .2	3.9	6.9

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financially successful. Indeed, Moynihan has even suggested that the decision of the Irish to concentrate their energies on political power may have prevented them from achieving financial and social success in American society. If this observation means that no more than a handful of the Irish (such as the Kennedy clan) have achieved fabulous wealth, then the observation is valid; but this has been true of all immigrant groups. If the observation is meant to indicate that the Irish have not achieved the high level of financial success that characterized American Jews, then, too, the observation is valid. However, if the implication is that the American Irish are, on the average, less successful economically than the typical white Anglo-Saxon Protestant living in the same cities as the Irish, the observation is quite invalid. Research carried on over a decade at the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) has shown that, holding region of the country and city size constant, the Irish are not merely on the average as financially successful as the WASP, but perhaps a trifle more so. (See Tables 3 and 4.) The notion that the Irish have somehow or other failed financially in American society is completely mythological.

IT IS COMMONLY ASSUMED among the Irish self-critics that even though the Irish have been overwhelmingly loyal to the Democratic party, it is still a "conservative" style of Democracy. Here the words "conservative" and "liberal" are obscure in their meaning. If there is anything that research on political attitudes demonstrates, it is that there is not a high correlation, save among ideologues of the Left or the Right, between a conservative position on one set of issues and a conservative position on other sets of issues. Thus, many members of the working class can be quite "liberal" on economic issues and still rather "conservative" on racial issues. And the data available to us at the National Opinion Research Center's ethnic program fails to substantiate the myth of Irish conservatism. Indeed, on the two critical issues of racism and anti-Semitism, the Irish are the most enlightened of the Catholic immigrant groups as Table 5 indicates. Nor is this more enlightened attitude merely the result of the occupational or educational achievement of the Irish. As Table 6 demonstrates, the basic difference between the Irish and the other three principal Catholic ethnic groups on the anti-Semitism score diminishes only slightly even when father's education and occupation and own education and occupation and family income is held constant. One conjecture is possible concerning the differences: it may be that the long-standing political alliance between Irish and Jews in the Democratic party has reduced Irish anti-Semitism to a low level.

Thus far, we have only been able to compare the Irish with other Catholic immigrant groups. However, data obtained from NORC's study of 1961 college alumni indicate that on a scale measuring sympathy for student and black militancy, the Irish have a higher score than all other American groups save the Jews. This difference does

TABLE 5

DIFFERENCES AMONG CERTAIN AMERICAN MALES

Ethnic groups*	Irish	German	Italian	Poles
Mean score on racism scale (0–5)	2.42	2.45	2.60	2.61
Mean score on anti-Semitism scale (0–2)	.84	1.23	1.11	1.71
(Numbers of persons interviewed)	(138)	(153)	(182)	(80)

** Father's main ethnic background.*

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not change, even when a control is made for the number of years of graduate school attendance by the 1961 graduates.

Much more research will be required, of course, to put to rest the myth of the Irish political reactionary masquerading under the Democratic label. However, the NORC data not only do not confirm this myth but also call into very serious question whether the myth can ever possibly be confirmed.

And yet the myth persists, bandied about both by the Irish self-critics and by those academic liberals who bitterly resent the persistence of Irish political control in many cities and states. It is legitimate, then, to ask the reason for the persistence of the myth, because the answer to such a question may give us some hint as to the peculiar and ambivalent role of the Irish in American life. Many of the official lay intelligentsia of the American Catholic Church seem to have a vested interest in denouncing Irish Catholicism because it enables them to blame the failure of the so-called conservatism of the Irish on the hated institutional Church. Any myth that can play such an important function is not likely to die easily.

It seems that nativist antagonism to the Irish has not been completely purged from the American body politic. No one has paid much attention to the subject in recent years (although the fact that nativist bigotry came within 110,000 votes of denying the presidency to John F. Kennedy but a decade ago would suggest that anti-Catholicism is still a factor in American society [4]). There is no American Irish Committee to correspond to the American Jewish Committee, nor is there an Irish Anti-Defamation League which could sponsor research on anti-Irish or anti-Catholic sentiment. It might be difficult for any but the most sophisticated research to discover such sentiment, for those who are most likely to hold it probably know all about the authoritarian personality. And yet, one can legitimately raise the question whether the intense hatred for Mayor Daley to be found among Jewish and Protestant academic intellectuals does not have something to do with the fact that he is not merely a politician but an *Irish* politician. Anyone who thinks that the treatment accorded the administration of Chicago's mayor in the official liberal journals bears any resemblance to what actually happens in Chicago politics is quite un-

TABLE 6

DIFFERENCES IN ANTI-SEMITISM SCORES

	German	Italian	Poles
Mean	.394	.273	.871
Father's education and occupation	.403	.370	.783
Father's education and occupation and own education	.322	.256	.667
Father's education and occupation and own education and occupation	.280	.238	.704
Father's education and occupation and own education and occupation and 1963 family income	.271	.235	.698

TABLE 7

SCORE ON SCALE MEASURING SYMPATHY FOR POLITICAL MILITANCY (JUNE 1961) COLLEGE GRADUATES RESPONDING IN 1968 (SCALE: 0–18)

All	9.5	(4,324)
Jews	11.9	(100)
Catholics		
Irish	10.6	(269)
German	9.2	(280)
Polish	10.5	(54)
Italian	8.3	(168)

[4] We here follow the conclusion of Professor Philip Converse and his colleagues that John Kennedy lost a net of 3 million votes because of his religion.

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familiar with the realities of Chicago life. It is not the intention of the present author to defend the mayor and his administration, but merely to argue that the bias against him is so great as to raise serious questions as to its origin. When one points out that Daley has been elected and reelected with the overwhelming support of both the black and Polish populations of the city, one is told that this is merely a manifestation of "ethnic politics," as though that were an answer and not a mere restatement of the question.

Writers such as Edward Levine and James Q. Wilson have pointed out that the Irish political style is both pragmatic and informal. The Irish politician is much more interested in winning elections than in taking the politically "pure" position and he also much prefers informal, off-the-record solutions to difficult problems than neat, orderly, and formal solutions. He is much more at home in the world of implicit compromise than in the world of explicit confrontation and, above all else, he prizes loyalty from his colleagues. As one young Irish political leader put it to me, "A man who will not be loyal to his friends will never be loyal to an idea."

These facets of the Irish political style can be seen clearly in the careers of John and Robert Kennedy—that is, the real Kennedys and not the Kennedys of liberal myth. The thought has occurred to rather few liberals that the Kennedys might both very well have believed in racial justice before 1960 but decided to do something about their convictions only when changing political pressures and attitudes made such action politically feasible. The Irish politician is prepared to believe that certain ideal goals must be postponed until they become feasible. Indeed, he is quite incapable of understanding why so many American liberals seem bent on going down to defeat for causes that are splendid but lost, while the American liberal, on his side, is shocked by what he thinks is the Irishman's unholy desire for victory, especially when victory seems to necessitate compromise. Unfortunately, it has been very difficult for scholars to understand Irish politics "from the inside."

Another aspect of the puzzling difference between the Irish myth and the Irish reality is the tendency of both the American Irish and their critics to use the Jews as a reference group. Clearly, Jews have been more successful in the United States than the Irish economically and educationally. The Jewish involvement in, and contribution to the cultural and intellectual life in America has been far greater than that of the Irish. The Irish have provided some first-rate writers of fiction, some entertainers, and some top-flight athletes but, compared to the Jews, Irish scholarship is almost infinitesimally small and Irish involvement in the fine and popular arts is almost invisible. Yet the same comment could be made of every other immigrant group. If Irish Catholics are compared, for example, with German Lutherans —a comparison which historically and culturally would make much more sense—then their success in American life will not look at all small. However, there may be some realism in the comparison for, after all, the the Irish and the Jews do tend to concentrate in the same cities and frequently have engaged in a contest for political power in these cities.

The Irish are also under serious fire from other Catholic ethnic groups who bitterly resent the domination of Catholic life in the United States by the Irish. To some extent, this domination was inevitable, for the Irish did come with both the language and the political skills. And they also developed an immensely sucessful ideology for their control by emphasizing the need of the immigrant group to become "Americanized," which often for other Catholic groups meant the same thing as becoming Hibernicized. The Irish ecclesiastical leaders, however, have consistently displayed much less imagination and skill at playing the game of ethnic politics than did their brothers and cousins in the world of secular politics. While there are some German bish-

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ops in the American Church, a handful of Slavic bishops, and one or two Italian bishops (and recently a Portuguese-American was named archbishop of Boston), the Irish domination of the hierarchy is still almost complete. In addition to Boston, only Philadelphia and Brooklyn, of the major sees, are presided over by Southern or East European bishops.

Antagonism toward the Irish has never really been hidden in these groups but as some of their members begin to move out into the mainstream of American intellectual and journalistic life, the resentment comes into the open. The Irish position, then, is extremely awkward. To the extent that any nativist bigotry survives, WASPs would resent the Irish as the most "pushy" of the Catholics. The Irish and the Jews are locked in combat for political control of a number of cities, with the Irish tending to feel a sharp cultural inferiority toward the Jews. And, on the other side, the more recent Catholic immigrant groups strongly resent Irish power. To make the picture complete, the Irish personality has never been marked by self-confidence (save, perhaps, when under the influence of John Barleycorn—and the Irish alcoholism rate, according to studies done at the Yale Alcoholic Center, is 25 times higher than that of the national population). Under such circumstances, just about everyone has a vested interest in suggesting that the Irish are political reactionaries who have failed in American society.

It has been the purpose of the first section of this article to call into serious question the myth. Let there be no mistake about it: the questioning is done by a member of the Irish group who has his own bias against the myth. But this is not to argue that the writer intends a panegyric for Irish ethnics. There have been serious failures, indeed on occasion, tragic failures among the American Irish. It is of course not my intention to argue that the Irish should not be criticized but rather to argue that they ought to be criticized for the things in which they have really failed. The fundamental tragedy of the American Irish, it seems to me, is that they have not been precisely those things which everybody says they are. In political affairs they have not been pragmatic enough. In religious affairs they have not been Americanized enough. In cultural affairs they have not been the creative madmen, nor the half-intoxicated mystics as which the stereotype is so often portrayed.

WITH THE BACKGROUND that has now been established it is possible to say some tentative things about the relationship between the American Irish and the American blacks.

1. As the data here presented indicates, the Irish are less likely to be antiblack than any other ethnic immigrant group, and indeed this difference seems to persist even when most relevant background variables are held constant. The Irish are not unprejudiced; they are simply less prejudiced, if our data are to be believed, than other groups. Much further research will be necessary to explain this phenomenon, although one could tentatively hypothesize that their mastery of the language and their political success have given the Irish a stronger base of security from which to view other immigrants to American cities.

2. Many of the myths about the Irish attitudes toward the blacks must certainly be called into question in view of the data presented at the beginning of this article. Thus, the notion that the Irish attitude toward blacks was conditioned by a competition between the Irish immigrants and freed slaves in the occupational market in the 1860s and 1870s remains to be proved. There is no doubt that there was some such competition and that it was involved in the horrendous New York race riots of 1863, which had to be put down by troops summoned from the Battle of Gettysburg. Nevertheless, antiblack sentiment seems stronger among other

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ethnic groups which did not have the Civil War experience.

3. The Irish are not very likely to engage in obviously racist behavior or to join in obviously racist organizations. The various antiblack militant groups in northern American cities have no Irish leadership and, generally speaking, Irish membership. One very militant community organization on Chicago's Southwest Side is presided over by a suspended Irish priest, but the strength of the membership is Eastern and Southern European rather than Celtic.

4. Among Catholics, and particularly among the Catholic clergy, the most enthusiastic "interracialists" are Irish even though they may not speak for a majority of their colleagues. Slavic and Latin names are virtually invisible in the ranks of the Catholic leadership that are enthusiastically sympathetic to the cause of blacks.

5. In some cities the Irish political leadership has actively supported the development of black political leadership. Although it is true that the fall from power of the Irish in New York City can in part be explained by the failure of the Irish to respond sympathetically to the problems of the blacks, New York in this respect, is not, typical. As one black leader in Chicago said to me, "I'm sticking with the Organization because for all its faults I don't see any other system likely to get as much for us as the Organization can. They don't get for everybody everything that they want but they do get enough to keep most groups happy most of the time, and that's the only way we're going to move ahead in this city."

In other words, this black leader saw progress inside the system as largely a matter of cooperation between blacks and the Irish minority that acts as a power broker between the blacks and other ethnic populations in the city. One may disagree with his conclusion and argue that blacks should wreck the system or at least work outside it; however, at this point in the city about which he spoke, it is clear that the vast majority of blacks are willing to bet on working within the system instead of outside it. With two U.S. Congress seats and as many as 15 aldermen, to say nothing of a host of other elected and appointed jobs, blacks have something to display for their efforts.[5] The willingness to slate black candidates in something resembling their proportion in the total population is characteristic of Irish political pragmatism. Some observers from the inside of Irish politics claim that there is a good deal more sympathy toward blacks than is commonly supposed. They contend that it is necessary to understand the rhetoric and the vocabulary, particularly of the old time political leaders, to understand that while they may not use the approved categories of liberal ideology, their substantive positions are rather more problack than antiblack.

There may be some validity in this assertion, though one would need to know much more of the mysterious internal world of Irish politics to be sure. Yet, I remember talking to one grizzled and tough—and very wealthy—general contractor about the pressure that he was receiving from his well-to-do friends to provide summer employment for their sons on college vacation. "There aren't that many jobs this summer," he said to me, "and if I hired all those kids I'd have to lay off some of my regular people who have families. You can't fire a family man even if he happens to be a nigger." Young priest that I was at the time, I was horrified by what I thought was an obviously racist comment, but upon reflection, I'm not so sure. The man had employed black laborers in an industry that at the time was not conspicuous for its eagerness to provide jobs for blacks and,

[5] One of the ironies of the 1970 election in Cook County is that Cicero and Berwyn, the most blatantly white suburbs in the county, are now represented in the U.S. Congress by a black representative. Conveniently for the Organization, the gentleman has a name that sounds Irish. There were, you can depend on it, no pictures of him in campaign posters in Cicero or Berwyn.

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despite his unfortunate choice of language, he made it clear that he was not going to discriminate against his black employees even if his close friends pressured him to do so. Despite his vile way of expression his behavior could not be faulted.

THIS IS the positive side of the balance sheet. It is stated first precisely so that the judgments implied on the negative side will not be seen as one-sided condemnations.

1. Despite all of the qualifications listed in the previous paragraphs, it must be said that the Irish, with a splendid and ancient revolutionary tradition of their own, have not been nearly as sympathetic to the black cause as one might have expected. Those whose forebears were in the thick of the New York riots of 1863 and the Chicago riots of 1919 ought to understand the forces at the root of urban violence. And those even today who honor Bernadette Devlin ought to sympathize with Julian Bond. Perhaps the problem is that the respectable well-to-do American Irish have forgotten their own past. This is convenient for them, but from the point of view of historical imagination quite unacceptable.

2. The Irish political leadership, for all its pragmatic skills, even in Chicago where they are most skillful and pragmatic, still does not seem to be able to understand the new black militancy. Even if that militancy's public manifestations are limited, it does represent the smoldering sentiments of many blacks and particularly the younger blacks. A pragmatic political leadership ought to be able to do more to respond to the restlessness of the young blacks than the Irish political leadership in the American cities has been able to do. To give them their credit, they have not necessarily discriminated against blacks in this respect because they don't seem to be able to understand the restlessness of the young whites, including their own offspring, either. I cannot escape the impression that in both cases the older, and even the middle-aged Irish political leadership, is not trying very hard. By their own standards of pragmatism, this lack of understanding the new restlessness is a grave mistake.

3. By permitting the deterioration of their creative talents, the Irish have deprived the rest of the society of the poets, the philosophers, the mystics who might have created a vision of the good life in an urban setting, in which white and black alike would exist in an atmosphere of relative peace and trust, enjoying the variety and diversity of urban ethnic groups instead of being threatened by such variety and diversity. As the first of the non-Anglo-Saxon groups, it is the one, with the possible exception of the Jews, that has been most successful in adjusting to the American environment, and it would seem that the Irish ought to have been uniquely able to dream visions of what American cities could have become, but they have been too busy with their golf and their cocktails at the country club.

4. When all is said and done, there is, in my judgment no way to escape the fact that there is a strain of dislike of the blacks among the Irish. It may not rear its head as overt prejudice, it may not lead to political or occupational discrimination, it may coexist with a commitment to equality in American life, but it's still there.

Finally, with their own past record of shrewd and pragmatic political and social advancement, the Irish may be quite intolerant toward other groups whose cultural background does not equip them quite so well for the competitive struggle in American society.

CONTRARY TO THOSE who say that the Irish have not been successful enough in American society, I would be inclined to argue that they have been far too successful.

If the Irish had really been political pragmatists they would have responded much more quickly to the aspirations and needs of the black and Spanish-speaking groups in the large cities. The fundamental reasons the Jews replaced the Irish in political power

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in New York City was not, as Moynihan and Glazer imply, the cultural superiority of the Jews, but rather that the Jews were able—through their WASP ally, John Lindsay—to communicate a sense of responsiveness to the nonwhite groups in New York, something at which the Irish failed miserably. Real political pragmatists would not have failed to recognize and respond to this challenge.

In Chicago, the Irish have been much more successful in holding their coalition of Slavic and black supporters together, and arrived at a much better modus vivendi with the Poles than the New York Irish have been able to do with the Italians. While some of the success of the Chicago coalition can be attributed to the astuteness of the Irish leadership—an astuteness that seems to be much superior to that of the Irish in New York—perhaps a more basic reason for the success of the Chicago Irish is that they have much smaller Jewish and WASP populations to contend with. Furthermore, in the Church, pragmatic leadership would have long ago recognized the legitimate complaints of the non-Irish ethnic groups.

Pragmatic leadership—to say nothing of religiously committed leadership—would have been far more aware of the necessity of identifying with the aspirations of the poor, the oppressed in the core of the city. The Irish, themselves the victims of long centuries of oppression, and heirs of an ancient revolutionary tradition, ought to have been pragmatic enough to know how to respond to other men's sense of oppression and to other men's struggle for freedom. Their failure to do so is a failure to honor the best of their own principles. Comparison with most other ethnic groups is false, but one can legitimately criticize the Irish for not being radical enough when compared with their own ancestors.

James T. Farrell described Lonigan's story as a "tale of defeat endured in an atmosphere of spiritual poverty." Physical poverty was a very real thing for Studs Lonigan; indeed, he died of pneumonia contracted while seeking a job. For his descendants in the country club set physical poverty is no longer a very serious possibility; but the spiritual poverty persists and grows worse. If there are no Jimmy Farrells arising at Ninety-Third and Hoyne it is not because there are not gifted and creative young people among the Chicago Irish. On the contrary, there are a large number of them, but the paralyzing Irish quest for respectability combined with the American success ethic has succeeded in putting the creativity and the vision of the fourth generation Irish-Americans in chains; this is a tragedy of immense consequences both for the Irish and the rest of American society.

I am not suggesting that the Irish become "failures" in American society. Quite the contrary, they are likely to be ever more successful and they are also likely to break out of the narrow parochialism the descendants of Studs Lonigan brought from Fifty-Seventh and Indiana to Ninety-Third and Hoyne. A basic tragedy of the American Irish is that the WASPs will finally have won and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of the immigrants will cease to be Irish in any meaningful way. They will have lost their flair for political leadership and their knack of telling stories.

There are some of us, however, who will feel that something has been lost. We can think, for example, of men like John England, the first bishop of Charleston, who was sent to the United States at the age of thirty-four because he was too much of an Irish radical for the Church in Ireland. More than a century and a quarter before the Vatican Council he turned over the governance of his diocese to an elected board of five priests and ten laymen, and a few weeks after he became an American citizen he stood before the U.S. Congress.

Yes, we Irish still are good at dreaming—dreaming of all the splendid things that might have been.

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Irving Howe

What's the Trouble?

Social Crisis, Crisis of Civilization, or Both?

> We must get it out of our heads that this is a doomed time, that we are waiting for the end, and the rest of it, mere junk from fashionable magazines.
>
> —SAUL BELLOW, *Herzog*

THE RHETORIC OF APOCALYPSE HAUNTS the air and naturally fools rush in to use it. Some of it is indeed "mere junk from fashionable magazines," and even those of us who know that we have lived through a terrible century can become impatient with the newest modes in *fin du mondisme*. Yet people who are anything but fools seem also to yield themselves to visions of gloom, as if through a surrender of rationality and will they might find a kind of peace. And there is a feeling abroad, which I partly share, that even if the Vietnam war were to end, our cities to be rebuilt, and our racial conflicts to be eased, we would still be left with a heavy burden of trouble, a trouble not merely personal or social but having to do with some deep if ill-located regions of experience. To be sure, if we could solve social problems of the magnitude I have just mentioned, our sense of the remaining troubles would come to seem less ominous. But they would still be there. They would be symptoms of a crisis of civilization through which Western society has been moving for at least a century and a half.

A social crisis signifies a breakdown in the functioning of a society: it fails to feed the poor, it cannot settle disputes among constituent groups, it drags the country into an endless war. If local, a social crisis calls for reform; if extensive, for deep changes in the relationships of power. Yet both those defending and those attacking the society may well be speaking with complete sincerity in behalf of a common heritage of values. Even a major social change doesn't necessarily lead to a radical disruption of the civilization in which it occurs. The American Revolution did not. By contrast, the Russian Revolution not only overturned social arrangements, it also signified a deep rent within the fabric of civilization—or so it seemed only a few decades ago, though today, with the increasing "bourgeoisification" of Russia, we can no longer be certain. Romantic writers like Pilnyak and Pasternak looked upon the Revolution less as a step to proletarian power than as an upheaval within the depths of their country that would force it toward a destiny sharply different from that of the West. Trotsky attacked these writers for this heresy, but in retrospect it does not seem that they were quite as foolish as he made out. They were talking about a crisis of civilization.

Though it may coincide with a social

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crisis and thereby exacerbate its effects, a crisis of civilization has to do not so much with the workings of the economy or the rightness of social arrangements as it does with the transmission of values, those tacit but deeply lodged assumptions by means of which men try to regulate their conduct. At least in principle, a social crisis is open to solutions by legislation and reform, that is, public policy. But a crisis of civilization, though it can be muted or its effects postponed by the relief of social problems, cannot as a rule be dissolved through acts of public policy. It has more to do with the experience of communities and generations than with the resolution of social conflict. It works itself out in ways we don't readily understand and sometimes, far from working itself out, it continues to fester. A social crisis raises difficulties, a crisis of civilization dilemmas. A social crisis is expressed mainly through public struggle, a crisis of civilization mainly through incoherence of behavior.

To speak of a crisis of civilization is not, of course, to suggest that our civilization is coming to an end: it may be but we have no way of knowing. Nor is it to suggest that every change taking place at the deeper and more obscure levels of our experience should immediately be submitted to a harsh moral judgment. There are many things about which we simply cannot know. We can only say that developments occur which occupy a longer time span and are more deeply lodged in the intangibles of conduct than is true for the issues of a given moment.

II

LET US NOW TURN abruptly away from our present concerns and move backward to a point some 75 or 80 years ago, in order to see how an English left-laborite or German Social Democrat might have felt about the experience of his time.*

The main historical fact about the nineteenth century—and for socialists, one of the greatest facts in all history—is that the masses, dumb through the centuries, began to enter public life. A Berlin worker had heard August Bebel speak; he was struck by the thought that, for all his limitations of status, he might help shape public policy; and indeed, he might even form or join his "own" party. He would, in the jargon of our day, become a subject of history rather than its object. What the worker came dimly to realize was not merely that history could be made, the lesson of the French Revolution, but that he himself might make it, the message of socialism.

The whole tragic experience of our century, I would submit, demonstrates this to be one of the few unalterable commandments of socialism: the participation of the workers, the masses of human beings, as self-conscious men preparing to enter the arena of history. Without that, or some qualified version of it, socialism is nothing but a mockery, a swindle of bureaucrats and intellectuals reaching out for power. With it, socialism could still be the greatest of human visions. This belief in the autonomous potential of the masses lay at the heart of early Marxism, in what we may now be inclined to regard as its most attractive period: the years in which European social democracy gradually emerged as a popular movement.

Meanwhile there was flowering in England the theory and practice of classical liberalism. By classical liberalism I have in mind not a particular economic doctrine, as the term has come to be understood in Europe, but rather a commitment to political openness, the values of tolerance, liberties such as were embodied in the American Bill of Rights, and that most revolutionary of innovations, the multi-party system. Among Marxists the significance of this liberal outlook was far from appreciated, and in the Marxist tradition there has un-

* The central idea for this section was suggested to me by Max Shachtman, though I cannot say whether he would approve of the way in which I have developed it.

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doubtedly been a line of opinion systematically hostile to liberal values. In time that would be one source of the Marxist disaster. So, unless he were the kind of laborite or social democrat who had become a bit skeptical of his received orthodoxies, our observer of 1895 wasn't likely to grasp the revolutionary implications of the liberal premise, or to see it as part of a large encompassing democratic transformation that ideally would link the bourgeois and socialist revolutions.

Our socialist observer might also have noted, in the somewhat reductive terms prevalent on the Left, that science was triumphant and religion in decay. He would surely not have suspected that weakening of religious belief, a development to which he had contributed, might bring unexpected difficulties to the lives of skeptics. Nor would he have paid attention to the views of, say, Dostoevsky on this matter, for as a rule he felt comfortable in the self-contained world that, together with an ideology proclaiming competence in almost all branches of knowledge, socialism had created for itself.

Finally, he might have become aware of certain trends in Western culture, such as the fierce hostility to bourgeois life shown by almost all writers and artists, including the reactionary ones, and the rapidity of change, indeed the absolute triumph of the principle of change, within European culture. A new sense of time, as Daniel Bell has remarked, came to dominate the arts, and the result would be that thrust toward restlessness and hunger for novelty, that obsession with progress as an end in itself, which has since characterized much of modern culture.

Let us now propose a brutal exaggeration, yet one that has its analytic uses: *by the time the nineteenth century came to an end, at a point usually agreed to be 1914, the basic direction of world politics starts to be reversed.* The First World War—as it reveals not only the hypocrisies of the Eureopean states, including the liberal bourgeois states, but the inability of the social democrats to prevent a global bloodbath—proves to be a terrible blow to the inherited attitudes of the earlier age of progress. If the nineteenth century promised, roughly speaking, an ever-increasing movement toward democracy and liberality, than the twentieth, even while exploiting the catchwords and passions of the nineteenth, would be marked by an overwhelming drift toward various kinds of authoritarianism. This would not of course be the only direction of political change in the twentieth century; vast popular movements, some burned out in defeat and others twisted into betrayals, would also appear in Europe and Asia. But if we remember that ours has been the century of Hitler and Stalin, then my "brutal exaggeration" about the main political drift may not seem . . . well, quite so brutal. The self-activity of the working class, that essential fulcrum of socialist power, would now be replaced in all too many instances by an authoritarian manipulation of plebeian energies (Communism in all its forms) or by an accommodation to the limited goals of the existing society (social democracy in most of its forms). Liberalism as both idea and value came under fierce attack. The expected benefits of Reason were scorned, as being either deceptive or unneeded. Modern culture was recruited as an authority in the assault upon liberal styles of feeling. What I propose to assert is that we have been living not—certainly not merely—in the Age of Revolution about which Trotsky spoke but in an Age of Counterrevolution that has assailed mankind from Right and Left. This, I know, is a view distasteful to what passes today for orthodox Marxism, and so I mean it to be.

The central expectation of Marxism—that by its own efforts the working class could transform history—was called into question. Every political tendency on the Left had to face the question: if the working class turns out not to be the revolutionary force that Marxists had supposed, what then? The spectrum of nominated substitutes, from union bureaucracies to insurgent kinder-

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gartens, from technocratic experts to soulful dropouts, has not been reassuring.

It is still too soon to speak with certainty. Has the vision of the self-activization of the masses, a vision democratic in its essence, proved to be false? Premature? Or merely delayed by historical interruptions and accidents?* I shall not try to answer this question, in part because I am not certain how to answer it, except to note the cogency of a remark attributed to Cournot: "The fact that we repeatedly fail in some venture merely because of chance is perhaps the best proof that chance is not the cause of our failure." In any case, for us this failure is the central problem of modern political experience, and it helps explain—even while being far from the sole explanation for—the fact that every mode of politics in our century succumbs in varying degrees to authoritarianism.

People employing another set of categories will no doubt see the politics of this century in other terms; but other terms can often veil similar perceptions. What seems likely is that all who share the view that democratic norms are essential to a tolerable life would be ready to grant some credit to the sketch that has been drawn here.

III

HOW ARE WE NOW TO RELATE the two lines of speculation I have thus far advanced—first, that we are experiencing the repercussions of a crisis of civilization (a few signs of which will shortly be noted) and second, that we are living through the consequences of the failure of socialism? Perhaps by a third line of speculation: that it is precisely the recurrent political-social difficulties of Western capitalism, significantly eased but not removed by the welfare state, which create a fertile ground for the emerging symptoms of a long-festering crisis of civilization. The social-political problems of the moment and the deeper crisis of civilization have, so to say, a habit of collaboration; they even maliciously assume the guise of one another. There follows a terrible confusion in which problems open to public solution become encumbered with metaphysical and quasi-religious issues while efforts are vainly made to bring into the political arena metaphysical and quasi-religious issues beyond the capacity of politics to cope with.

Why we should be experiencing this confusion of realms is a question to which the answers are either too easy or too hard. Let us not rehearse them at length. The atom bomb has made us aware that the very future of the race hangs on political decision. The Nazi and Stalinist concentration camps have raised questions as to the nature of our nature: is there an inherent bestiality in mankind beyond the correction of collective activity? The Vietnam war, in a more recent moment, has been felt by segments of the young as an international trauma, serving to break ties of loyalty with both society and

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* In 1948, writing on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of *The Communist Manifesto,* one of Trotsky's close associates remarked about the working class that

> It has shown itself capable of outbursts of heroism, during which it sacrifices itself without a thought, and develops a power so strong as to shake society to its very foundations. It can rid itself in an instant of the most inveterate prejudices, while there seems to be no limit to its audacity. But by and by, whatever the consequences of its action, whether victory or defeat, it is finally caught up in the sluggish, quotidian flow of things.
>
> The fetid backwaters of the past seep back; the proletariat sinks into indolence and cynicism. And even in its triumphant moments, it exhibits a want of consciousness in its choice of leaders. The "instinctive sense of reality" attributed to it by Auguste Comte, which it so readily reflects in many a circumstance, abandons it at such moments. Its courage and self-sacrifice are not enough to give it what, precisely, is needed in order to act out the role assigned to it by Marx: political capacity.
>
> —JEAN VANNIER,
> "A Century's Balance Sheet,"
> *Partisan Review,* March 1948

The question Vannier is raising here is not merely whether the working class can take power —that is an old and well-rehearsed question. He is asking something more troublesome: can a triumphant working class, once in power, display the political "capacity" to rule over a modern society or will it, in effect, cede power to an alliance of bureaucrats, intellectuals, and technocrats?

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earlier generations. In the West a generation has arisen accustomed to affluence and therefore able to devote itself to problems of life, sometimes merely life-style, as against the problems of making a living. Higher education on a mass scale is becoming a reality in Western society, yet no one quite knows what its purpose, content, or outcome is or should be. A counter society, half-real and half-myth, has appeared as the Third World, imbued by its admirers with a mixture of utopianism and authoritarianism, revolution and primitive nobility: all arising from a revulsion against advanced society. Such are the reasons that might be given for a situation in which the crisis of modern civilization, recurrent for at least a century and a half, is again felt as immediate and pressing; but what we do not really know is the relative weights to assign to these reasons, and that means we do not know very much.

The difficulty—let us say, one difficulty—of living at this moment in history is that we experience, both as *simultaneity and contradiction,* the problems of three stages of modern society. Or to be more modest we experience problems that in our thought we have assigned to three stages of society: precapitalist (race, illiteracy, backwardness); capitalist (class conflict, economic crisis, distribution of wealth); and postcapitalist (quandaries concerning work, leisure, morality, and style, such as are sometimes described as "existential," a term meant to indicate significant imprecision). But it is crucial to note that we experience these three orders of difficulty within the context of an advanced or "late" capitalism. Problems therefore suddenly appear in this late capitalist society that we had supposed would emerge only under socialism—problems not to be described merely or mainly in terms of social class but rather as pertaining to all human beings. (It ought to be said that the more intelligent socialists had foreseen the possibility that by liberating men from material want socialism might impose upon them a severe crisis of civilization, though impose it under circumstances more favorable to the human imagination than had been possible in the past.)

In the industrialized countries capitalism has entered a phase of unprecedented affluence, not justly distributed yet still reaching almost every class in society. Many people, especially those drawn from the upper and middle classes, have thereby come to experience a certain freedom to see their lives in generalized or abstract "human" terms. In the long run this is surely what one hopes for all humanity—that men should free themselves, to the extent that they can, from the tyranny of circumstances and confront their essential being. In the short run, however, this occurs, to the extent that it does occur, within a social context that distorts and frustrates the newly acquired sense of the human. For it occurs within a context of class domination and social snobbism, as well as at a historical moment forcing upon the young ghastly dilemmas. At one and the same time, a young person of middle-class origin can feel free to experiment with his life, yet must also live under the shadow of a war perceived to be unjust and even criminal. He can feel himself free to abandon the norms of bourgeois society, yet in doing so he will often unwittingly reinstate them as self-alienating masks and phantasms.

I am aware here of a possible criticism: that in speaking of these three stages of recent history as they had been thought of by socialists, I am referring not to objective realities but to conceptions nurtured, perhaps mistakenly, by people on the Left, and that there is nothing inherent in modern history which requires that certain problems be correlated with early capitalism or others with socialism. I accept this criticism in advance, but would only add that all of us see, as we must see, historical developments through the lens of our assumptions, and that those who reject socialist categories may come to similar conclusions through their own terms about the mixture of problems I have been discussing. We might, for example, choose to say that during the past decade we have become aware that the religious disputes of

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the nineteenth and the social anxieties of the twentieth century are related—with the issues that obsessed the nineteenth century, issues that had to do with the desanctification of the cosmos, surviving into our own moment in surprisingly powerful ways. For what should interest us here is not the "rightness" of a particular intellectual vocabulary or tradition, but a cluster of insights that might be reached through different vocabularies and traditions.

In any case, the jumble of interests and needs I have been associating with various stages of modern history could also be regarded as distinctive elements—elements of conflict and tension—within the welfare state. It is in the very nature of the welfare state that through its formal, ideological claims it should arouse steadily increasing expectations which as an economic system still geared mainly to a maximization of profit it does not always or sufficiently satisfy. The welfare state systematically creates appetites beyond its capacity to appease—that, so to say, is the principle of dynamism which keeps it both in motion and off balance. The welfare state cannot count upon those fierce sentiments of national loyalty which, precisely insofar as it has come to dominate the industrialized portion of the world, it replaces with an array of group and sectional interests —that much-vaunted pluralism of interests often concealing an imbalance of opportunity. The welfare state has small attraction as an end or ideal in its own right, and little gift for inspiring the loyalties of the young. It is a social arrangement sufficiently stable, thus far, to all but eliminate the prospect of revolution in the advanced countries; but it is also a social arrangement unstable enough to encourage the militant arousal of previously silent groups, the intensification of political discontents, and the reappearance, if in new and strange forms, of those tormenting "ultimate questions" with which modern man has beset himself for a century and a half. These "ultimate questions" as to man's place in the universe, the meaning of his existence, the nature of his destiny—that they now come to us in rather modish or foolish ways is cause for impatience and polemic. But we would be dooming ourselves to a philistine narrowness if we denied that such questions do beset human beings, that they are significant questions, and that in our moment there are peculiarly urgent reasons for coming back to them.

IV

HOW DOES ONE KNOW that we, like our fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers, are living through a crisis of civilization? What could possibly constitute evidence for such a claim? Even to ask such questions may strike one as both comic and impudent: comic because it seems a little late to be returning to a theme that has been pursued to the point of exhaustion, impudent because it can hardly be approached in a few pages. One is tempted simply to say what Louis Armstrong is supposed to have said when he was asked to define jazz, "If you don't know, I can't tell you." For if felt at all, a crisis of civilization must be felt as pervasive: as atmospheric and behavioral, encompassing and insidious.

How shall we live? — this question has obsessed thoughtful people throughout the modern era, which is to say, since at least the French Revolution, and it has obsessed them with increasing anxiety and intensity. I don't suppose there has ever been a time when the question hasn't been asked, but in those centuries when religious systems were commonly accepted as revealed truth, the problems of existence necessarily took on a different shape and eventuated in a different emotional discipline from anything we know in our time. Some of the more spectacular symptoms of disaffection we are now witnessing ought to be taken not as historical novelties revealing the special virtue or wickedness of a new generation, but as tokens of that continuity of restlessness and trouble which comprises the history of Western consciousness since the late eighteenth century.

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One major sign is the decay or at least partial breakdown of the transmission agencies—received patterns of culture, family structure, and education—through which values, norms, and ideals are handed down from generation to generation. It would be self-deceiving, if for some comforting, to suppose that we are going through just another "normal" struggle between generations which "in time" will work itself out through familiar mechanisms of social adjustment. The present conflict between generations or if you prefer, between segments of the generations, is "normal" only insofar as it seizes upon, intensifies and distorts those philosophical, moral and religious themes which we have inherited from the nineteenth century.

The decay or partial breakdown in the transmission of values occurs most dramatically among middle-class and upper-middle-class youth secure enough in the comforts of affluence to feel that in the future our primary concern will be existence rather than survival. Some declare an acceptance of received values but cry out against their betrayal by the system or the men who run it; others reject the received values (sustained work, restraint as a social discipline, postponement of gratifications in behalf of ultimate ends, goals of success, etc.). In practice, it is hard to keep the two kinds of response completely separate. Young protesters often believe they are motivated by a fundamental denial of Western civilization when in reality they are unhappy with their private lot. But more important by far is the fact, as I take it to be, that those who believe they are motivated merely by a revulsion against the betrayal of accepted values are in reality being moved, at least in part and at least with partial consciousness, by the more extreme visions of life-style that we associate with postindustrial society. One result is that in the name of rejecting their elders' betrayal of liberal values they slide into contempt for those values.

The immediate social form through which such young people try to organize their responses is a cluster of distinctively generational groups lying somewhere between family and occupation. Torn between the problems of too much freedom and the problems of too little, between the fear of an endless chaos and the claustrophobia of rigid social definition, they create, in the words of Richard Flacks, "institutions which can combine some of the features of family life with those of the occupational structure. Youth groups, cultures, movements serve this function, combining relations of diffuse solidarity with universalistic values." One immediate cause for establishing these institutions is frustration with the external society: there is less and less socially useful or meaningful labor for young people to do and the consequence is that while the process of socialization is sped up the prospect of maturation is delayed. These fragile institutions of the youth culture also reveal themselves as testing grounds for experiment with, or acting-out for, the crisis of values which long antedates their appearance. Miniature settings serve as laboratories, sometimes mere sickrooms, for dealing with the largest problems of modern life.

Now, it has been argued by writers who are skeptical of the above description that signs of disaffection, whether trivial or profound, are mostly confined to segments of affluent youth and that the blue-collar young, still facing a struggle for economic survival, cannot indulge themselves in such existential luxuries. Perhaps so. But even if true, this hardly minimizes the importance of what has happened within large and significant segments of middle-class youth—especially in the United States where the middle class sprawls across the social map and strongly influences the ways in which adjacent classes live.

If your main concern is to plot out lines of voting behavior, then it is indeed crucial to notice the class limitations of the new youth styles; but if you are concerned with long-range social trends, then you must recognize that by their very nature these are likely first to appear among minorities. (It

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does not follow that everything to be found among minorities will become a long-range social trend.) What needs, then, to be estimated, or simply guessed, is the extent to which such minorities—in our case, a rather substantial one—may shape the conduct of tomorrow. Clearly, it is too soon to say whether we are witnessing a transient outbreak of malaise reflecting the privileges and disadvantages of middle-class youth or a fundamental revision in the patterns of our life reflecting the emergence of postindustrial society, the loss of faith in traditional puritan and bourgeois values, and the persistence of moral and metaphysical problems thrown up by the crisis of civilization. To insist merely upon the former might be parochial; merely upon the latter, grandiose. But even if we lean toward skepticism, we ought to recognize the possibility that a series of intermittent generational traumas, and the current one is hardly the first, might constitute a long-range historical trend of major importance.*

About the gravity of a second major symptom that points to a crisis of civilization there is likely to be less dispute. The whole enterprise of education is in grave trouble. It is marked by anxieties bordering on demoralization and often a retreat from serious purpose that becomes sheer panic. In part this seems due to immediate causes that might let up in a few years; in part it signifies a thread of confusion that has kept recurring throughout the history of modern education. There seems barely any consensus among professors as to what they are supposed to profess, barely any agreement among educators as to what they believe education to be or do. There is little concurrence in our universities, and not much more in our high schools, as to the skills, disciplines, kinds of knowledge, and attitudes of mind we wish to develop. The more education is exalted in our social mythology, the less do we seem to know what it means.

Curricula discussions at faculty meetings are notoriously tiresome, yet they finally do reflect disputes and mirror disorientation concerning the very idea of education and thereby, perhaps, the very nature of our civilization. What, beyond the rudiments of literacy, do people need to know? What, beyond such needs, should they wish to learn? What do we hope to pass on from one generation to the next in regard to moral and cultural values? What is our image of an edu-

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* A few points in rebuttal of those who, in the name of plebeian solidity, minimize the significance of the new youth styles:

• It is hard to suppose that the feelings of disaffection or dismay one encounters among young people are confined to those who come from a single class, though it may well be that such feelings are most strongly articulated by them. Yet even among plebeian segments of our population there are visible strong feelings of rage and resentment, sometimes turned against "the students," but in origin and character often sharing with "the students" sentiments of powerlessness and dismay.

• Today's middle-class style can become tomorrow's working-class style. In this country, the lines of social and cultural demarcation between the classes are not nearly so firm as in other capitalist societies. Youth mobility is high; working-class children go to college in increasing, if not sufficient, numbers; they are likely to share at least some of the responses of other students; and they do not bring with them a strong sense of class allegiance or definition to which they feel obliged to cling and which might create psychic barriers between them and their middle-class peers.

• Mass culture quickly provides lower-class equivalents to middle-class styles, and often succeeds in spilling across class barriers. There are overwhelming cultural or pseudo-cultural experiences shared by the young of all classes, certainly more so than in any previous society. Movies, rock music, drugs—these may not figure with equal force in the lives of both working- and middle-class youth, but increasingly they do create a generational consciousness and solidarity that, to an undetermined extent, disintegrates class lines.

(Since the above was written, there have appeared reports of widespread and serious drug usage among young workers, both white and black, in major American industries. Whatever this may signify, and I don't pretend to know, it ought to be sufficient evidence to dismiss the claim that somehow the less attractive features of the "counter culture" are unique to disoriented or spoiled middle-class youth. For good or bad, illumination or contamination, young workers in a mass society increasingly share the surrounding general culture.)

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cated man? Around such questions disputes rage, and rage so harshly that connections can barely be made between the antagonists. For these are disputes that come down to the question of how or whether we shall maintain a vital continuity with traditional Western culture.

When a society does not know what it wishes its young to know, it is suffering from moral and spiritual incoherence. It has no clear sense of the connections it would maintain—or whether it even wishes to maintain them—with the civilization of which presumably it is a part. And when to this incoherence is added the persuasion that young people should be kept in schools for increasing lengths of time (often with the parallel notion that schools should be made to resemble the external society, which is to say, to be unlike schools), then immediate and long-range troubles are thrust into a dangerous friction.

The United States, and to a lesser extent other advanced countries of the West, have embarked on a project which, we socialists would like to think, might better have coincided with the growth of a democratic socialist order. It is a project that declares every citizen to be entitled to a higher education and soon may enable every citizen to obtain one. Who can fault this premise? But who would deny that there are extremely troubling results from undertaking so revolutionary a task under social circumstances often inhospitable to it? Those of us who spoke for a universalization of culture and education were not, I think, wrong; but we were naive in our sense of how it might be brought about, or what the cost of bringing it about might be. We failed to see that some problems are not open to quick public solution, and we refused to see that the solution of other problems might lead to new and unforeseen ones. In the short run—and who knows, perhaps even the long run—a conflict develops between the values of high culture and the values of universal education, to both of which we are committed but between which we would hardly know how to choose, if choose we had to. Millions of young people are thrust into universities and no one quite knows why or toward what end. The immediate result is social bitterness and clash. One of the few things these millions of young people may discover in the universities is, however, that learning and culture, since they are but faintly credited by many of their teachers, need hardly be credited by them. That expresses and intensifies a crisis of civilization.

Ultimately, one suspects, this crisis has to do with residual sentiments of religion and vague but powerful yearnings toward transcendence. For to the extent that the transmission of values is blocked and a lack of faith in the power of education spreads among the educated classes, there must follow a more pervasive uncertainty as to the meanings and ends of existence. Let me turn to a vocabulary not spontaneously my own and suggest that we are beginning to witness a new religious experience—or, perhaps, an experience of religious feelings. Partly because of the sterility of traditional religious institutions, this experience cannot easily be embodied in religious terms and it must therefore assume the (often misshapen) masks of politics, culture, and life-style.* Our socialist of 75 or 80 years ago, smug in his rationalism and convinced that all would be well once "we" took power, could hardly understand such a development; his first inclination would have been to regard it as a sign of reaction. For that matter, it is by no means clear that a socialist of the present moment can understand it, either. Yet, no matter how alien we remain to the religious outlook, we must ask ourselves whether the malaise of this time isn't partly a consequence of that despairing emptiness

* This kind of remark, I know, is too easily used as a way of dismissing the radical young; I dissociate myself from such an intent. Many, though not all, of their manifest complaints are valid and deserve to be taken at face value, and my point applies only to the structures of feeling and expression through which these are made known.

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which followed the breakup in the nineteenth century of traditional religious systems; whether the nihilism every sensitive person feels encompassing his life like a spiritual smog isn't itself a kind of inverted religious aspiration (so Dostoevsky kept saying); and whether the sense of disorientation that afflicts us isn't due to the difficulties of keeping alive a high civilization without a sustaining belief. All questions of the nineteenth century; all returning to plague us at the end of the twentieth.

Richard Lowenthal has remarked on this score:

> We have not yet had a civilization that was not based on a transcendent belief. And what we are trying to do is to maintain our values and move upon the momentum of these values originally created by religion—but after the transcendent belief is gone. The question is: will we succeed?

To such questions a simple answer is neither possible nor desirable. Even if we conclude that the breakdown of religious systems, enormously liberating as in part it was, also yielded unforeseen difficulties for those who might never have stepped into a church or a synagogue, this is not to be taken, of course, as a token of support for those who wish to recreate through will the dogmas that were once supported by faith. Perhaps we have no choice but to live with the uncomfortable aftereffects of the disintegration, aftereffects that range from moving efforts at private spiritual communion to flashy chemical improvisations for pseudo-religious sects. I am convinced, in any case, that the coming era will witness a proliferation of such sects, some betraying the corrupting effects of the very technology they will repudiate, others mixing antinomian ecstacies with utopian visions, and still others seeking to discover through simplicities of custom the lost paradise of love.

Again experience proves far more recalcitrant and complicated than any of our theories has enabled us to suppose. It may indeed be that the religious impulse is deeply grounded in human existence and that men need objects of veneration beyond their egos. "The Golden Age," wrote Dostoevsky, "is the most unlikely of all the dreams that have been, but for it men have given up their life. . . . For the sake of it prophets have died and been slain, without it the peoples will not live and cannot die. . . ." If the impulse Dostoevsky invokes here cannot be expressed through religious channels, then it must turn to secular equivalents. It turns to the fanaticism of ideology (which may explain the continued hold Marxism has on the imaginations of the young, for is not Marxism the true religion of our century?). It turns to heretical sects seeking an unsullied pantheism. It turns to communities of the faithful who repudiate technology and civilization itself, a repudiation as old as religion itself.

Who can say? Remembering the certainties of our socialist of 75 or 80 years ago, good decent and even heroic fellow that he was, we might be a little cautious in dismissing the needs and aspirations of our fellowmen, especially those we find difficult to understand. All we can say with assurance or good will is that the themes of religious desire appear and reappear in the experience of our epoch, tokens of "the missing All," whether as harmony or dissonance. And they will surely be heard again.

An anxiety,
A caution,
And a caution against the caution.

The anxiety: whenever there occurs that meeting of social crisis and crisis of civilization I have sketched here, democratic norms and institutions are likely to be in danger. If we look at the collapse of democratic societies in our century, we must conclude that the usually cited causes—economic depression, unemployment, etc.—are necessary but not sufficient elements; there must also occur some loss of conviction in the animating ethos of the nation or culture, some coming-

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apart of that moral binder which holds men in the discipline of custom. Anyone observing the intellectual life of the West during the past decade may be struck by the thought that some such loss of conviction, or some such coming-apart of moral binder, seems to be happening, if not among the masses, then certainly among growing segments of the educated classes. The bourgeois mythos has been losing its hold on the bourgeois mind, though nothing has come along to replace it. Nothing, that is, except that vulgarized quasi-Marxism which has been improvised by a small though significant minority of the intellectual young. Nor should this, by the way, come as a surprise, for no other twentieth-century ideology has been so powerfully able to stir or corrupt the nascent religious impulses of sensitive and uprooted people.

By an irony too painful to underscore, it is only in Eastern Europe that intellectuals have come to appreciate the value of liberal institutions. In the West, a mere three decades after the ravages of totalitarianism, there is again visible a strident contempt for the ethic of liberal discourse and the style of rationality. In part this arises from the mixed failings and successes of the welfare state, but in part from an upswell of unacknowledged and ill-understood religious sentiments that, unable to find a proper religious outlet, become twisted into moral and political absolutism, a hunger for total solutions and apocalyptic visions. Impatience with the sluggish masses, burning convictions of righteousness, the suffocation of technological society, the boredom of overcrowded cities, the yearning for transcendent ends beyond the petty limits of group interest, romantic-sinister illusions about the charismatic virtues of dictatorship in underdeveloped countries—all these tempt young people into apolitical politics, at best the commune and at worst the bomb, but both sharing an amorphous revulsion from civilization itself.

Why then should one suppose that such sentiments can pose a threat to democratic institutions? Because, if carried through to the end, they release yearnings and desires that by their very nature cannot be satisfied through the limited mechanisms of democratic politics. Because, if carried through to the end, they summon moods of desperation and fanaticism which lead to a dismissal of democratic politics.

The caution: nothing could be more disastrous for our political life in the immediate future than to have the modest, perhaps manageable and (as some intellectuals like to suppose) "boring" problems of the welfare state swept aside in behalf of a grandiose, surely unmanageable and (as some intellectuals would feel) "exciting" *Kulturkampf* between the up-tight and the loose, the repressive and the permissive. If, say, in the next decade figures like Spiro Agnew and Jerry Rubin, or to choose less disreputable substitutes, William Buckley and Charles Reich were allowed to dominate public debate, people would vote according to their prejudices concerning drugs, sex, morality, pornography, and "permissiveness." A bleak prospect; for while such a situation might arise out of spontaneous passions on all sides, it might just as well have been arranged as a political maneuver for the far Right, the only political group that could profit from it. And even if I am wrong in supposing that only the far Right could profit politically from a *Kulturkampf,* how much comfort is that? For the one thing that is entirely clear is that a politics or a social outlook devoted to democratic social change and the style of rationality would lose.

What is required here is a measure of social and intellectual discipline, the capacity for keeping one's various interests distinct and in a hierarchy of importance: thus, legalization of marijuana may be a desirable goal but it is as nothing compared to ending the Vietnam war, and if raising the first issue will impede progress on the second, then we must restrain ourselves. Furthermore, we must recognize that at least in a democratic society politics has built-in—and in the long run, desirable—limitations. It may be pos-

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sible through legislation to remove some of the socioeconomic causes of alienation but it is not possible through politics to cope directly with that seething cluster of emotions we call alienation; it may be possible through legislation to improve the conditions under which men work but it is not possible through politics to cope with the growing uncertainties men have as to work and leisure.

That in a society so beset as ours with ideological noise and cultural clatter we should expect the necessary discipline—give unto the ballot box its due, and leave for your life-style what your taste requires—seems all but utopian. But if we lack that discipline, we will pay heavily.

The caution against this caution: There are limits to common sense and pragmatism, which those who favor these qualities ought to be the first to recognize. The Fabian course to which democratic socialists in the United States are, by and large, committed, seems to me the closest we can come to political realism; but precisely for that reason we ought to recognize the points at which it fails to stir the imagination or speak to the troubles and passions of many people. Such a politics offers a possible way of improving and extending the welfare state, which is about as much as one can hope for in the immediate future, but it has little to say about problems that the welfare state is barely equipped to cope with. A politics of limitation, of coalition, of step-by-step change is desirable; the alternatives are neither real nor attractive; yet we must not allow strategy to blot out vision.

So let us be ready to acknowledge to others and ourselves that between the politics we see as necessary and the imaginative-expressive needs we have as men living in this time, there are likely to be notable gaps. The chaotic but profoundly significant urges and passions that sweep through modern society —at once innocent and nihilistic, aspiring and gloom-ridden, chiliastic and despairing— must touch us as well as those with whom we have political quarrels. How could it be otherwise? Who, looking upon the experience of our century, does not feel repeated surges of nausea, a deep persuasion that the very course of civilization has gone wrong? Who, elbowing his way past the wastes of our cities, does not feel revulsion against the very stones and glass, the brick and towers, all the debris of inhumaneness? Who, thinking of our bombs and our pollution, does not wish, at least on occasion, to join in the jeremiads against all that we are and have?

If we felt no impulses of this kind we could hardly call ourselves socialists, since we would have lost the wish for a qualitative transcendence of the given reality. If we allowed such impulses to dominate our minds and our conduct, we could hardly call ourselves socialists either, since we would have lost that fraternal feeling and patience that require democrats to heed the wishes of the people. What we must do is to recognize the distance, perhaps the necessary distance, between political strategy and existential response. We are saying that many things requiring remedy are open to social-political solution (provided intelligence and will are present). We are also saying that we live at a moment when problems beyond the reach of politics—problems that *should* be beyond the reach of politics—have come to seem especially urgent and disturbing. We have learned that the effort to force men into utopia leads to barbarism, but we also know that to live without the image of utopia is to risk the death of imagination. Is there a path for us, a crooked path for men of disciplined hope?

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Michael Harrington

The Misfortune of "Great Memories"

Historical Remarks on the Paris Commune

> The misfortune of the French, even of the workers, is that they have *great memories.* It is necessary that events once and for all put an end to this reactionary cult of the past.[1]
>
> —MARX, *to Cesar de Paepe, September 14, 1870*

MARX'S BITTER COMMENT to de Paepe just before the Paris Commune was typical of his mood in those days. The French section of the International Workingmen's Association had, in the midst of the war between France and Prussia, turned back to the rhetoric of 1793 and called for a revolutionary war against the invader. In a letter to Marx on September 7, 1870, Engels gave a pithy summary of their common, and outraged, view of the French socialists.

> These people [wrote Engels] who tolerated Badinguet [Napoleon III] for 20 years, who only six months ago could not keep him from getting 6 million votes as against a million and a half opposed, or from provoking Germany without reason or warning, these people, now that the German victory has given them a republic—and what a republic!—insist that the Germans must promptly leave the soil of France or else: *guerre à outrance!* It is the old presumption of superiority, the attitude that the land is sanctified by 1793 and that no later French swinishness can desanctify it, the superiority of the holy phrase, Republic.[2]

I recall these remarks of Marx and Engels on the reactionary cult of the French revolutionary past for a purpose. We have reached the 100th anniversary of the Commune, and throughout the world the Left has celebrated it with appropriate piety. In part, this speaks to a genuine identification with the brave Communards massacred by the bourgeois terror. In part, it derives from the fact that Lenin made his interpretation of the Commune a crucial precedent for his seizure of power in October 1917, so that every state and party that venerates his memory must also acquiesce in his version of what happened in Paris in 1871.

The Commune has become, in short, a *great memory* in precisely the sense that Marx used the phrase: a mythic moment in the past that confuses our understanding of the present. Moreover, Marx and Engels knew—and said—that it was a myth. During and immediately after the event they defended it out of honorable motives of solidar-

[1] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, hereafter cited as *MEW* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1957–), vol. 33, p. 147.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

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ity with the victims of a terror imposed in the name of law and order—and they also had factional reasons for playing down its extremely un-Marxist character. But both before and after the Commune they expressed their real—and historically much more defensible—attitude: that the courageous Parisians had sacrificed themselves in a badly led, tactically botched movement, which set back the socialist cause in their country for at least a decade.

In the months prior to the Commune, Marx was first of all concerned about the low level of leadership in the French movement. "If a revolution breaks out in Paris," he wrote to Engels, "one must ask oneself, do they have the means and the leaders for serious resistance against the Prussians? One cannot hide from the fact that the 20 years of Bonapartist farce have been enormously demoralizing. One is hardly entitled to rely on revolutionary heroism." [3] And Engels wrote to Jenny Marx: "The worst thing is—in case of an actual revolutionary movement in Paris, who will stand at its head?" [4]

Shortly after these letters, in early September of 1870, Marx wrote the Second Address of the General Council of the IWMA on the Franco–Prussian war.

> The French working class [he said] finds itself in an extremely difficult situation. Any attempt to overthrow the new regime while the enemy is at the very door of Paris would unquestionably be a folly. The French workers must perform their duty as citizens, but they must not let themselves be dominated by the national memories of 1792, as the French peasants allowed themselves to be deluded by the national memories of the First Empire. They must not repeat the past but build the future. *Let them calmly and patiently utilize the means which republican liberties grant to them in order to carry out the basic organization of their own class.* That will create a new, herculean force for the rebirth of France and for our common task—the emancipation of the proletariat.[5] [Emphasis added—M. H.]

This theme of utilizing the new civil liberties in order to carry out basic organizational work runs through their correspondence of the period. In praising Auguste Serraillier, the International's envoy in Paris, Engels remarked that "his ideas about the situation are clear and correct: use the freedoms guaranteed by the Republic for the organization of the party in France, act when the opportunity offers itself after effective organization, and restrain the International in France until peace is achieved." [6]

They were thus concerned with curbing their French comrades because they had little confidence in them. "The French branch," Marx wrote to Engels in September 1870, "is committing all kinds of stupidities in the name of the *International*. 'They' want to overthrow the provisional government, establish a Paris Commune, name Pyat [a French radical particularly disliked by Marx and Engels] as French ambassador in London, etc." [7] And Marx was personally outraged when the French Internationalists telegraphed him instructions on how he should carry on the agitation in Germany.[8]

In the spring, however, the Commune became a fact. Marx's attitude changed, and changed radically for a number of reasons.

To begin with, a struggle was underway, and Marx had no doubt as to his side of the barricades. In a letter to Kugelman he wrote enthusiastically, "What resiliency, what historic initiative, what capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians!" And then, in the very next line, he reversed the position he had taken in the Second Address, using almost the same words to come to an opposite conclusion: "After six months of hunger and ruination, caused at least as much by internal betrayal as by the foreign enemy, they rose up under Prussian bayonets as if there never had been

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 117.
[5] *MEW*, vol. 17, p. 278.
[6] *MEW*, vol. 33, p. 57.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 54.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

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a war between France and Germany and the enemy was not at the very gates of Paris!" This, he ended, "is the most glorious act of our party since the Paris June insurrection." [9] (The problem is, as will be seen, and as Marx was later to admit, that the act was not carried out by Marx's party at all or, in the majority, by socialists of any kind.

In a second letter to Kugelman, Marx attempted to give a more developed rationale for his new position:

> World history would be quite accommodating if the struggle would only break out under unerringly favorable conditions. It would be quite mystical if "accidents" played no role. . . . The decisive, unfavorable "accident" in this case is not in any way to be found in the general circumstances of French society but rather in the presence of the Prussians in France and their position right before Paris. The Parisians know this quite well. This, however, the bourgeois canaille of Versailles understands just as well. Precisely for that reason they presented the Parisians with the alternatives of either taking up the fight or else surrendering without a struggle. The demoralization of the working class in the latter case would have been a far greater misfortune than the succumbing of any number of "leaders." The struggle of the working class with the capitalist class has entered upon a new phase. Whatever the immediate outcome, a new point of departure of world historical importance has been achieved.[10]

IN SHORT, EVEN WHEN HE RALLIED to the Commune, Marx regarded it as an experience imposed in considerable measure upon the workers by their enemies, and he did not predict victory ("whatever the immediate outcome" would imply a pessimistic assessment of the future).

Hal Draper, in his Introduction to a new collection of Marx's and Engels's writings on the Commune, points out that Marx's illness in April 1871 had a psychosomatic component because he knew that the collapse of the Commune was only a matter of time.[11] Indeed, in May 1871 Marx's wife wrote a revealing letter to Kugelman which corroborates this psychological assessment of Marx's illness and also shows that, even as he was writing his ardent defense of their revolution, he privately retained all of his earlier criticisms of the Parisians.

Mrs. Marx wrote to Kugelman:

> You can't have an idea of how much my husband, the girls, and all of us have suffered because of the French events. . . . The lack of military leadership, the entirely natural distrust of everything "military," the insistent interference of the journalists and of knights of the phrase like Felix Pyat, the quarrels, irresolution, and contradictory actions which necessarily result—all these evils, inevitable in a movement so audacious and so youthful, would certainly have been overcome by the core of the sound, self-sacrificing and self-confident workers. But now I think that all hope is lost, now that Bismarck, getting paid by German gold, is handing over not only all prisoners but all fortifications to the French canaille . . ., every one of whom represents some infamous crime. Another June massacre lies before us. . . .[12]

In other words, the fears Marx and Engels had expressed prior to the Commune about the weakness of the leadership in Paris had been confirmed. Yet in *The Civil War in France,* Marx celebrated the Parisians as the discoverers of "the political form . . . under which to work out the economic emancipation of labor." [13] In part, this was because he was clearly determined to defend the Commune against its detractors and therefore to put the most optimistic interpretation on everything that took place during its brief existence. In *The Civil War,* for instance, Marx writes, "The financial measures of the

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 205.
[10] *Ibid.,* p. 209.
[11] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Writing on* the Paris Commune, Hal Draper, ed, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), p. 13.
[12] *Ibid.,* pp. 222–23.
[13] *Ibid.,* p. 76.

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Commune, remarkable for their sagacity and moderation, could only be such as were compatible with the state of a besieged town." [14] Yet, as will be seen in a moment, he really thought that the financial measures of the Commune—above all the failure to move against the Bank of France—constituted a crucial tactical error.

Marx was also defending himself against critics on his Left. It was with some justice that Bakunin wrote,

> The impression made by the communist insurrection [the Commune] was so powerful that even *the Marxists,* all of whose ideas had been tossed overboard by the insurrection, saw themselves forced to take off their hats in its presence: they did even more. *In contradiction to all logic and to their own feelings they made the program and aim of the Commune their own.* It was a comic, but forced, travesty. They had to do it or else they would be repulsed and left behind by everyone, so powerful were the passions this event had excited in the whole world.[15]

Karl Korsch would later develop this point from a Marxist perspective. *The Civil War in France,* he said, was written at a given historic moment in a spirit of "blood and fire." In order to defend the essence of the Paris Commune, Marx had to play down his criticisms of its political form. His purpose, Korsch writes, *"was not only to annex Marxism to the Commune but thereby also to annex the Commune to Marxism."* [16] His problem, Korsch writes, was to take a federalist, anticentralist reality and give it a centralist interpretation. This was particularly difficult since there were only 25 workers among the 70 revolutionaries elected in the Commune on March 26, 1871, and, in any case, Proudhonists, Blanquists, and Jacobins were far more numerous than Marxists.[17]

In order to do this Marx had to adopt a strange device in describing this precursor of the socialist regime, i.e. a supposed archetype of the most conscious society human history would ever know. "The great social measure of the Commune," he wrote in *The Civil War,* "was its own working existence. Its special measures could only betoken the *tendency* of a government of the people by the people" [emphasis added].[18] In other words, it was not so much what the Commune did but the fact that it existed at all that was crucial in Marx's most enthusiastic interpretation. In a letter to Eduard Bernstein in 1884, Engels was quite specific on this count: "That in the *Civil War* the *unconscious* tendencies of the Commune were credited to it on a more or less conscious plane was under the circumstances correct and even necessary." [19]

Finally, Marx and Engels were considerably more candid about the Commune once the attacks upon their position, from both Left and Right, had receded into the distance.

In a letter to Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis in 1881, Marx made a stunning reassessment of his interpretation—or, more precisely, he surfaced all the criticisms and misgivings he had suppressed in *The Civil War.* Nieuwenhuis, a Dutch socialist, had asked Marx what measures a victorious socialist movement would take, a question that was to be discussed at an international meeting in Zurich in October 1881. Marx replied that what could be done would depend upon the circumstances. Then he added that a socialist regime could only come to power when the circumstances are so developed that it could take all the crucial measures to intimidate the bourgeoisie so that the first desideratum —time for sustained action—can be won.

> Perhaps you will refer me to the Commune: but, abstracting from the fact that this was a mere rising of a city under exceptional circumstances, the majority of the Commune

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[14] *Ibid.,* p. 81.
[15] Bakunin, quoted in *Schriften zur Sozialisierung* (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969), pp. 102–103.
[16] *Ibid.,* p. 104.
[17] Karl Kautsky, *Terrorisme et Communisme* (Paris: Povolozky, n.d. [original German edition, 1919]), p. 84.
[18] Draper, *op. cit.,* p. 81.
[19] *MEW,* vol. 36, p. 79.

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> was in no way socialistic, and also could not have been. With a little common sense it could have reached a compromise with Versailles useful to all the people—which was all that could have been gained. The appropriation of the Bank of France would by itself have put an end with terror to the boasting of Versailles.[20]

(Marx's reference to "terror" here is ironic. The Commune executed the archbishop of Paris and 64 hostages; Marx felt that Versailles would have been much more terrorized if the insurrection had seized their treasure.)

Here the Commune is no longer the discovery of "the form of proletarian rule"; it is now the "mere rising of a city under exceptional circumstances." Moreover, Marx's comments are not isolated and casual. His criticism of the decisive failure of the Commune—that it did not seize the Bank of Paris—was repeated by Engels in 1891 in his introduction to a new German edition of *The Civil War in France*. "That was a serious political error," Engels wrote. "The Bank in the hands of the Commune—that would have been worth more than ten thousand hostages." [21]

At the very end of his life, in the 1895 Introduction to *The Class Struggles in France,* Engels was even more explicit. He argued that the events of 1870–71 proved that

> In Paris no revolution is possible except a proletarian revolution. After the victory, power fell undisputed into the hands of the working class. And once again it was shown how impossible even then, 20 years after the time described in this work, the rule of the working class was. On the one hand, France left Paris in a lurch, looked on while it was bloodied by the bullets of MacMahon; on the other hand, the Commune consumed itself in fruitless argument between the two parties that split it, the Blanquists (the majoriy) and the Prouhdonists (the minority), neither of which knew what to do.[22]

GIVEN THIS HISTORY of Marx's and Engels's attitude toward the Commune, it is time to disabuse ourselves of some "glorious memories." The Commune was courageous and revolutionary, and is hallowed by its sacrifice of blood. (Given my Irish background, I am particularly sensitive to the idea of heroic defeat; Ireland had nothing else for more than a century.) But it was not the model of the socialist revolution to come, as Marx and Engels themselves understood and said, once they were no longer under political pressures, from Left as well as Right, to defend the courage of the Parisians.

Hal Draper begins the Introduction to his collection of writings on the Commune with the conventional Leftist statement: "One hundred years ago, on March 18, 1871, a working-class-led revolution took power and established a new type of state for the first time in the history of the world—temporarily, in one city." [23] This thesis is not, I believe, supported by a careful reading of the very documents which Draper himself has quite usefully assembled. The Commune was not primarily led by workers and, in Marx's opinion, it was badly led in any case. It did not establish a "new type of state," even if Marx projected a vision of one on the basis of the "tendencies" of what took place there. It did not even appropriate the bank of Paris and was not "socialistic" or even very conscious of itself, for neither its majority nor minority, as Engels pointed out, knew "what to do."

There is good reason to be clear about this glorious, and inaccurate, memory. The myth of the Commune has been used, from Lenin on, to propagate the notion that there is some simple way to smash the bourgeois

[20] *MEW*, vol. 35, p. 160.
[21] *MEW*, vol. 22, p. 196.
[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 516–17.
[23] Draper, *op. cit.* p. 7.

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state apparatus and to proceed to create new and lasting revolutionary forms. That was not true in Paris in 1871—and it was not true in Petrograd in 1917 or Peking in 1949. There is no "day" of the revolution on which history makes its leap from past to future. Since Marx once helped make the myth that there was, one should pay some attention to his more considered opinions when he helped to unmake it. The bravery of the Parisians in 1871 will be no less magnificent if one is truthful about it.

GBS on Revolution and Gradualism

WE HAVE THE DISTINCTIVE TERM *Social Democrat, indicating the man or woman who desires through Democracy to gather the whole people into the State, so that the State may be trusted with the rent of the country, and finally with the land, the capital, and the organization of the national industry—with all the sources of production, which are now abandoned to the cupidity of irresponsible private individuals.*

The benefits of such a change as this are so obvious to all except the existing private proprietors and their parasites, that it is very necessary to insist on the impossibility of effecting it suddenly. The young Socialist is apt to be catastrophic in his views—to plan the revolutionary program as an affair of 24 lively hours, with Individualism in full swing on Monday morning, a tidal wave of the insurgent proletariat on Monday afternoon, and Socialism in complete working order on Tuesday. A man who believes that such a happy despatch is possible, will naturally think it absurd and even inhuman to stick at bloodshed in bringing it about. He can prove that the continuance of the present system for a year cost more suffering than could be crammed into any Monday afternoon, however sanguinary. This is the phase of conviction in which are delivered those Socialist speeches which make what the newspapers call "good copy," and which are the only ones they as yet report. Such speeches are encouraged by the hasty opposition they evoke from thoughtless persons, who begin by tacitly admitting that a sudden change is feasible, and go on to protest that it would be wicked. The experienced Social Democrat converts his too ardent follower by first admitting that if the change could be made catastrophically it would be well worth making, and then proceeding to point out that as it would involve a readjustment of productive industry to meet the demand created by an entirely new distribution of purchasing power, it would also involve, in the application of labor and industrial machinery, alterations which no afternoon's work could effect. You cannot convince any man that it is impossible to tear down a government in a day; but everybody is convinced already that you cannot convert first- and third-class carriages into second class; rookeries and palaces into comfortable dwellings; and jewellers and dressmakers into bakers and builders, by merely singing the "Marseillaise." No judicious person, however deeply persuaded that the work of the court dressmaker has no true social utility, would greatly care to quarter her idly on the genuinely productive workers pending the preparation of a place for her in their ranks. For though she is to all intents and purposes quartered on them at present, yet she at least escapes the demoralization of idleness. Until her new place is ready, it is better that her patrons should find dressmaking for her hands to do, than that Satan should find mischief. Demolishing a Bastille with seven prisoners in it is one thing; demolishing one with 14 million prisoners is quite another. I need not enlarge on the point: the necessity for cautious and gradual change must be obvious to everyone here, and could be made obvious to everyone elsewhere if only the catastrophists were courageously and sensibly dealt with in discussion.

—George Bernard Shaw, in *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, London, 1889 □

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Erazim V. Kohák

Russia: The Fire Next Time ?

On the Inner Crisis of Communist Society

THEY'RE RIOTING in Africa, they're starving in Spain—as the Kingston Trio used to sing—but in Russia they're "building socialism." There may be occasional tremors on the fringes of Comrade Brezhnev's "socialist commonwealth," requiring the firm hand of the Soviet army, but the Russian heartland stands solid as the Rock of Magnitogorsk. The Soviet Union today appears anything but revolutionary.

A sociological analysis seems to confirm this impression. The Soviets have built up an efficient political and economic machine. The Party controls all public communication, and the Politburo controls the Party. The successful reversal of "liberalization" and then the reconquest of Czechoslovakia provide evidence that the Soviet regime can cope with virtually any challenge.

Yet I submit that the Soviet Union is ripe for a fundamental social revolution. Not the old-fashioned revolution with sailors firing at government offices and revolutionary cavalry sweeping down upon decadent defenders of the old order. The stable internal structure precludes that. But an analysis of the relation between the modes and means of production and the forms of social organization suggests that the Soviet Union, more than any other country, is ripe for a social revolution.

Soviet state ideology is based on the thesis that the Revolution which triumphed in 1917 is one and definitive, defining "socialism" for all time. Formally this used to be described as "socialism in one country," practically it means that the Revolution is the private property of the Soviet *apparat*. This Revolution can be consummated, internalized, exported—but it cannot develop further. The official prospect is more of the same—and under the same management.

This thesis is now being challenged, not by "imperialists" abroad or "reactionaries" at home—the former are more interested in trading technology than contesting ideologies, the latter recall their pre-Soviet Golden Age in old folks' homes. The official thesis is being challenged by Marxists, first by those who echo the passions of Communism's revolutionary past, second by those who confront Communism with a vision of its promised humanist future.

The first challenge, which pits the formative passions of the Revolution against the bureaucratic stagnation of the Soviet state, is the more spectacular. For years it had been represented by Leon Trotsky, a one-man museum of Revolutionary Russia. Today its banner has been taken up by Third World movements, whose home conditions seem to approximate those of Russia in 1917 and so lend some credibility to the old slogans. Cuba and more recently China have declared themselves the most prominent exponents of vintage "revolutionary" Communism.

Spectacular the Chinese challenge to the Soviet Union may be, but it is also largely irrelevant. In a society as industrially mature as the one that 50 years of enforced modernization has created in Russia, there sim-

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ply exists no basis for a mass revolutionary crusade of aroused peasantry against a handful of semifeudal lords. Ideologues like Mikhail Suslov knowingly dismiss the "cultural revolution" as an infantile disease, pardonable if directed by a leadership loyal to Moscow, otherwise heretical—but structurally irrelevant to the problems of present-day Soviet society.

The challenge of liberalizing "revisionism" is far more serious. Ideologically it is less clearly defined than Trotskyism or Maoism; it has no powerful spokesmen—even its most explicit eruption, in the Czechoslovak reforms of 1968, was muted and, thanks to the Soviet army, short-lived. Yet Soviet ideologues reserve their most uncompromising attacks not for the Chinese, but for the voices that suggest socialism must become democratic. The Chinese remind the Russians that they, too, had once been populist revolutionaries—true, but irrelevant in an industrialized country. The Marxist humanists remind the Russians that the Revolution had once promised freedom and justice—and that with the completion of basic industrialization, the promise has come due.

To Moscow this is pure heresy. The official thesis holds that the fundamental outlines of socialist society have been formulated once and for all by the industrial revolution and its social counterpart, the proletarian revolution. Once these two changes have taken place, all further changes are reactionary by definition. Subsequent scientific and technological development, no matter how extensive, is officially devoid of social significance. The "scientific-technological" revolution, central to the intellectual ferment in the Soviet Union and its client states, simply may not exist, and if it does it must not be used to justify a social counterpart, the socialist-democratic revolution. Traditionally, the Communists have accused social democrats of accepting only half a revolution. Today it is the orthodox "Leninists" who appear willing to carry the logic of their own position only to the half-way point of an industrializing dictatorship in the name of the proletariat—but are unwilling and/or unable to follow it through to socialist democracy.

The reversal is not surprising. Postindustrial development simply does not fit the traditional Leninist matrix. Classical Marxist theory, formulated under nineteenth-century conditions, reflects the conditions and limitations of the industrial proletariat. It enshrines the realities of its time as eternal verities. It recognizes only one cataclysmic transformation—the industrial revolution with its sociopolitical counterpart, the proletarian revolution.

IN SPITE OF ITS RHETORICAL EMPHASIS on the dynamics of history, Leninism is a profoundly static world view. The entire development from the rise of private property to the industrial revolution, which Engels traces in *Origins of the Family,* represents for it no fundamental change. All is preparation, a story of evolving forms of individual ownership in which rulers change but the principle of rule remains constant. Only the industrial revolution brings about a significant transformation, creating for the first time a class of *social* producers—Feuerbach's *Gesamtmensch,* the commune-ist—and pitting it against the very principle of individual ownership, as well as against the actual owners. Objectively, the old eon ends and the new begins with the socialization of labor in the factory: the proletarian revolution is only the inevitable sociopolitical reflection of economic reality.

Nor does classical Communist theory allow room for progress on the other side of the Revolution. The nineteenth-century factory, with its massing of labor in the sector of production, is seen as the definitive socioeconomic model of the new society. When Engels declared in the 1870s that military technology had reached its qualitative peak with the development of the dreadnought and the rapid-firing gun and could thereafter

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change only quantitatively, he was postulating the paradigm of a world view. For once the great watershed between individual and social production has been reached, subsequent development can only be quantitative. "Socialist" and "Communist" stages become entirely formal, entailing no changes in the institutional framework of the Revolution—in fact, the official transition of the Soviet Union to the "socialist" stage was accompanied by no visible changes. Or, as the XXIVth Congress of the Soviet Communist party recently affirmed, the only legitimate social aspiration after the Revolution is for more of the same.

This one-revolution model of history is only marginally challenged by the Third World revolutionaries and Western romantics who insist on revolutionary enthusiasm as a permanent feature of the new order rather than as an understandable need in early stages of the revolution. But the real substantive challenge comes from economic and technological development which suggests that the industrial revolution—and, by implication, the proletarian revolution—constitute *only one* step in social development, and a transitional one at that, rather than the birth of the new eon.

On a theoretical level, this recognition calls for a multirevolution model of history, based specifically on what revisionist intellectuals have described as the "scientific-technological revolution." From this perspective, the traditional "industrial revolution" appears as a transitional stage, centered on a basic reorientation of society, from a strategy of survival in the face of inevitable scarcity to an active strategy of creating sufficient productive capacity to abolish that scarcity. Intellectually, the shift requires a change from philosophies of reconciliation, emphasizing stoic stability and spiritual compensations in the face of temporal ills, to philosophies of discontent, struggle, and achievement, whether in the form of Western pragmatism or Communist revolution. Objectively, the society must extort sufficient capital for initial industrial investment, and must volatilize its social structures to render men readily deployable *en masse,* as flexible, interchangeable blocks of "socialized" factory labor.

It is these needs which make the first stage so utterly brutal. Early industrial economy remains technologically quite primitive. Its productive principle is the regimentation—"socialization"—of labor. Industrialization must alienate men from traditional social supports, deprive them of social ties, make them radically individual, radically alone—and so, susceptible to being welded into a mass. At the same time, it must impoverish them economically. The capital required for initial industrial investment must be withdrawn from an economy already marked by scarcity. Industrialization is a stage of radical dehumanization, requiring a generation of spiritually and economically impoverished mass men. Whatever its ultimate fruits, the process itself is one that a society can survive only by heavy reliance on opiates, whether divine, chemical, or dialectical.

This is why Marxist-Leninist ideology seems so appealing to societies entering on early industrialization. Marxism-Leninism does not worry about the agonizing task of sustaining human values under conditions which discourage their survival. It pacifies consciences with its faith that ultimately the Communist society will more than compensate for the suffering of the transitional era. The ultimate goal, the social or commune-ist man, is essentially a man capable of surviving under the conditions of early industrialization, which Marxism regarded as objectively definitive and susceptible only to ideological compensations.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT in the last 30 years, however, has tended to reverse rather than emphasize the objective traits of early industrialization. In the first place,

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with technological maturity industry begins to generate capital internally. It no longer requires drastic impoverishment—quite the contrary, it requires affluent consumers. Pauperization, which in the age of industrialization was an economic necessity, now becomes an anachronism.

A parallel reversal takes place in the demands made on labor. The mass man of the early factory, whose chief virtues were discipline, endurance, and "socialization," becomes obsolete in principle. The role he performed is taken over by machines. With rising technological complexity and the rising cost of labor, a different set of virtues is required—high skill levels, ability to function responsibly with minimal supervision, ability to make decisions and exercise initiative. Human labor increasingly shifts from mechanical to control tasks, and from the highly socialized secondary sector into the far more individualized tertiary sector of distribution and service.

East European revisionists of Dubček's or Djilas's stamp simply acknowledge, along entirely Marxist lines, the social consequences of economic change. Their quarrel is not with Marxism. Quite the contrary. Precisely because the revisionists are Marxists, they consider economic change socially significant.

Read in Marxist terms, the basic revisionist recognition, from Bernstein to Djilas, is that in a technologically mature, potentially prosperous society concerned with building a humane social context rather than simply multiplying productive capacity, the entire elaborate apparatus of autocratic control becomes retrogressive together with its ideological justification. To safeguard social justice under conditions of technological complexity does indeed require socialism, even more than early industrialization—but in a rather different sense than that of the egalitarian phalanx of the nineteenth-century factory, or Trotsky's brigades of socialist labor, or Castro's charming anachronism, the cane-cutting brigades. It requires socialism in the sense of social supervision over economic planning of production and distribution; it requires socialization of basic services, whether medicine, old-age pensions, or education.

But at the same time a technologically mature society requires a broad range of individual initiative, free movement of men and information, and, most of all, freedom of imagination. Rigid orthodoxy and autocratic social structures are incompatible both with the flexibility and initiative required by a complex economy and with the psychology of a prosperous society. An early industrial worker could feel comfortable under Party discipline because it mirrored closely his daily work experience. The worker in the technological era lacks that experience. The phalanx mentality of "intensified class struggle" becomes as obsolete as the marginal classes of owners and owned, capitalists and proletariat. Even in capitalist countries, in spite of institutional inertia, class differentiations are increasingly replaced by differences of rewards among men who are basically participants—that is, differences among earned incomes. These differences can still be grossly disproportionate, but as differences among participants they signify problems to be solved rather than battles to be won. While the dictatorship in the name of the proletariat—or rule of robber barons in the name of democracy—was the social counterpart of the first, industrial revolution, the counterpart of the second, technological revolution might more plausibly be socialist democracy: social organization and planning, responsible to a society of free men.

The transition from the industrializing age to the technological age—and with it from the age of the irresponsible mighty and the disciplined proletariat to the era of social democracy—is the most pressing task of the industrially mature countries. Theoretically at least, this transition should have proved less problematic for the Soviet Union than for the West. After all, the regime that

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has ruled Russia for the last 50 years, though by no means socialist, did eliminate private ownership of the means of production and did create an extensive framework of social services that is capable of receiving socialist content. For eight months, Czechoslovakia seemed well on the way toward making the transition. But the Czechoslovak experiment ended in a Soviet occupation once it became obvious that while democracy poses no threat to socialism, it does pose a threat to the autocratic power of the official guardians of the Revolution.

CONTRARY TO THEORETICAL EXPECTATION, managers of state power are proving less flexible and more powerful than the managers of economic power. In the West, the forms of democracy, which radicals repeatedly and with considerable justification saw as hypocritical, did survive the age of the robber barons. With the coming of the technological revolution and the creation of a real basis for genuine democracy, they are capable of acquiring new content and significance. Not without rhetoric, not without strife, but basically without social trauma: democracy may not have always assured that dissent would be effective, but it did guarantee it a certain legitimacy and so the possibility of an effective role under new conditions.

In the Soviet Union, however, a transition from the industrial to the technological era —and with it the transition from economic autocracy to social democracy—is inevitably traumatic. The Revolution made no attempt to preserve either the form or substance of "bourgeois" democracy or civil rights. There was, in any case, little to preserve. The traditional Russian principles of social cohesion have been *samoderzhavi i pravoslavi*—autocracy and orthodoxy—and these the Revolution took over wholesale. Nor was there anything in the initial task of modernization and industrialization which would encourage the growth of democracy. Quite the contrary. When the Soviet Union, under Stalin's leadership, tackled the tasks of industrialization in earnest, total autocratic control, exceeding even that of the nineteenth-century "captains of industry," appeared a highly useful tool. The system that resulted was not simply a product of Stalin's lust for power: it was also a hypostatization of all the autocratic, regimenting and dehumanizing elements of the process of industrialization. The men who ruled Russia in the name of Marx and Lenin had structurally a great deal in common with Tomáš Bata and Henry Ford I.

Here, precisely, is the rub. The Soviet revolution placed total power, unhindered by "hypocritical" constitutional or humane considerations, in the hands of the Communists and enabled them to create a social system geared exclusively to the needs of early industrialization. This is what made the system so timely in the industrial era—and makes it so utterly obsolete in the technological era. There is a moral in Soviet experience for the Third World, though a different moral than its leaders, bent on rapid industrialization, choose to draw. Industrialization is a brutal process, which lends itself readily to totalitarian rule and fanatic ideology. Democracy and civil liberty in the period of early industrialization seem artificial constructs. But industrialization is a means, not an end, and unless a society consciously strives to preserve at least some formal counterparts of democracy and freedom, its industrialization becomes self-defeating, incapable of being used as the basis for a humane society and incapable even of progress beyond its early stages. An autocratic regime does accurately reflect the brutal, dehumanizing conditions of early industrialization. This is what makes it seem so "natural"—though it is by no means obvious that it is desirable or helpful to have the regime simply mirror rather than interact with the thrust of the economic process. But precisely because the Soviet regime is so completely suited to the needs of the stage of early industrialization, it is ill equipped

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to cope with the problems of industrially mature society.

Unfortunately the lesson comes too late for the Soviet Union. The institutions of the early industrial/proletarian revolution are too obsolete to generate the wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, whether police-inspired on Stalin's model or mass-inspired *à la* Mao Tse-tung. And they are too rigid to survive the democratization required by a maturing society. The decisions of the Soviet leadership since the fall of Khrushchev reflect a conviction that the transition into the twentieth century is too costly, both at home and abroad. Domestically it would require dismantling the elaborate control apparatus, once justified by the needs of forced industrialization but obsolete today. Internationally it would mean that the Soviet Union would move from the status of the most developed country of the Third World to that of the least developed Western one. Hence the decision, the promise of the future is more of the same.

It is an uninspiring program—and an unrealistic one as well. For as Marx pointed out, ideological rigidity can retard technological advance but cannot arrest it. The Soviet Union's place as the most advanced country of the Third World is rapidly being preempted by China. Soviet technology is placing increasing strain on the rigid ideological structure. Soviet planners are caught in a bind between the need to modernize the economy and the need to preserve an obsolete economic structure that justifies the traditional Soviet ideology. By shrinking from the consequences of Khrushchev's liberalization and reverting to rigid autocratic control, Soviet leaders may well have made sure that that revolution would take the form of a traumatic upheaval rather than an organic evolution.

The script comes straight out of Karl Marx: the real basis of the society, its modes and means of production, have changed drastically. The old ruling class has become economically obsolete, and is maintaining itself in power solely through a mystifying ideology and the repressive apparatus of the state (Party), bureaucracy, army, and police. But the people of the Soviet Union have paid a high price for creating the economic prerequisites of a humane, prosperous society, and Czechoslovakia has demonstrated a way of making use of those prerequisites which is not a reversion from an obsolete Communism to an equally obsolete capitalism. The result is a revolutionary situation that may for the moment lack sociological counterparts —that is, the actual opportunity for an upheaval—but is historically real.

STAGNATION, THE ALTERNATIVE CHOSEN by the XXIVth Congress, does not solve the problem. In the long run it only weakens the regime and multiplies opportunities for an upheaval. There are only two alternatives: a regression to a primitive revolutionary pattern with some Russian equivalent of the Chinese cultural revolution or a democratization along Czechoslovak lines. Almarik's question, Will the Soviet Union survive to 1985?, is really a question about the direction of Soviet development—China or Czechoslovakia?

A revolutionary upheaval on the Chinese pattern is hardly a live option for the Soviets. The Soviet Union is not a semifeudal, agricultural country, in spite of its backwardness and the feudal traits of the Soviet system. While the rudimentary structure of Chinese economy could survive the cultural revolution, the highly complex Soviet structure would be set back several generations. Almarik's question finally boils down to the second alternative: is the Soviet Union capable of a Czechoslovak-style democratization?

There is considerable evidence that a sizable portion of Soviet opinion believes in that possibility—the increasing volume of internal dissent, the evident ambivalence toward the occupation of Czechoslovakia,

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the increasing readiness of Soviet citizens to treat their Constitution as a binding document, not simply as a smokescreen for arbitrary power. The author of *Khrushchev Remembers,* who might well be Nikita Sergeyevich himself, evidently spoke for many of his countrymen when he wrote that the Soviet Union has created the prerequisites of socialism, that it is time to remove the fetters and realize those possibilities. Khrushchev is hardly a social democrat: he rose to prominence under Stalin, within a Stalinist system. His decision to embark on a relatively liberal course as well as the support he received suggests that not only Soviet intellectuals but even some Party officials see liberalization of the regime as a necessary first step.

Paradoxically, Eastern Europe may well be a crucial factor in the decision of Khrushchev's successors to revert to a hard domestic policy. Domestically the Party would in all likelihood be strengthened by liberalization. For a great many Russians, Communism remains a symbol of hope and the Party the bearer, albeit currently faltering, of that hope.

In Eastern Europe, however, liberalization would in all likelihood have a far more profound effect. Here the heritage of harsh alien rule and memories of such events as the suppression of the Berlin uprising in 1953, the Hungarian uprising in 1956, and the Czechoslovak reform in 1968 have created an explosive potential that makes even limited liberalization a high-risk policy.

The choice facing the Soviets today is hardly easy. They can revert to harsh, repressive control, but only at the cost of social and economic stagnation which in the long run seriously weakens their competitive ability abroad and stability at home. They can embark on a course of liberalization which would for a time strengthen the Party domestically, but critically weaken the Soviet hold on Eastern Europe. It is not surprising that the present leadership has so far avoided that decision and has sought to maintain the status quo.

IT IS HARD TO PREDICT the future. Marxist analysis has traditionally suffered from a tendency to do so with little regard for the empirical data of the present, solely on the basis of ideological deductions. I do not wish to fall prey to the same error. It is possible that the Soviets will maintain the status quo, sinking gradually to the status of the sick man of the Neva—though the dynamics of Soviet technology make this unlikely. It is possible that the Soviets will embark on a course of harshly repressive re-Stalinization, triggering a violent response that would shake the state to its very foundations. There is also the hopeful possibility that the Soviets and the West will succeed in creating a *cordon sanitaire,* perhaps completing the belt of Scandinavia to the north and Yugoslavia and Austria to the south by demilitarization of central Europe, that is, of the two German states and the western part of Czechoslovakia. Once the confrontation on the Elbe has been defused, a relaxation of the Soviet hold on Eastern Europe might become acceptable, freeing the Soviet leadership to carry out urgent domestic reforms.

All that is possible, and careful sociological analysis might be able to determine which course is probable. Marxist analysis can hardly claim to do that. But it can, rather confidently, make a different claim: Soviet society today faces a conflict between a stagnant social system and the dynamics of economic development. Shoring up the obsolete political system by the repressive power of the state does not solve the problem—it accentuates the conflict. The same is true of economic growth: such growth does not strengthen the regime, but makes its internal conflict more acute. The surface stability of the Soviet Union in a turbulent world covers over a fundamental revolutionary situation.

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Lewis Coser

What Do the Poor Need?

(Money)

WRITING THESE PAGES in Europe allows me to look at the problem of American poverty in a way I might not have chosen had I written in America. Visiting the slums of Naples and North Africa or traveling through the Sicilian or Greek countryside, one realizes that their misery, their utter deprivation, their stark horrors are qualitatively different from the poverty one encounters in the United States. You can, of course, see in the Mississippi delta cases of deprivation similar to those in Mediterranean slums, yet poverty in America is by and large no longer a problem of sheer physical survival, of utter immiseration and pauperism. Poverty in America concerns, in the main, not absolute but relative deprivation. We suffer from a highly unequal distribution of incomes, with the result that a fairly large proportion of the population is daily reminded of the fact that, compared to the rest, it is severely disadvantaged.

Beyond the primary issue of income distribution, poverty raises the question of full citizenship for the poor. Not only are the poor relatively deprived when it comes to goods and services; they are also politically deprived of the rights and privileges that come with citizenship in a democratic society.

The well-to-do and the poor still live as two different nations. To be poor in contemporary America means not only that one disposes of less income but also that one is aware of having little or no access to the levers of political power; that one feels excluded and alienated from the political process; that one is likely to conceive of oneself as a pawn, an object, of social and political developments rather than a self-conscious political subject.

The Need for Income Redistribution

WHATEVER THE MERITS of the various elaborate standards by which the number of poor is currently estimated and poverty lines are drawn, most uses of these statistics obscure the major fact that, though the number of people falling below statistical poverty lines has dropped considerably in recent years, there has been no redistribution of national income as between the poor and the rest of the population.

The number of Americans below the U.S. Census Bureau poverty level—$3,743 in annual income for a nonfarm family of four, in 1969—dropped from 39 million in 1959 to 24.3 million in 1969; but the percentage of total money income that flows to the bottom 20 percent of American families has hovered at around 5 percent ever since the end of World War II. There has been a reduction of the flow of income going to the top 5 percent of the American population, but this drop, while profiting the middle ranks, has had no discernible effect on the poor. The much touted Income Revolution has not meant an increase in the share of income for the poor. In absolute terms they are indeed better off, but in relative terms they are almost exactly where they stood 25 years ago. And that is the real scandal! Hence radicals, even while supporting this or that measure which promises to alleviate

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the ailments from which the poor suffer, need most of all to focus on redistribution of the flow of national income. Unless that is done, the poor will always be with us.

The elimination of poverty in America will not be attained even when almost all of its citizens have moved above one of the statistical poverty lines. It will occur only when the present distribution of income is changed so that the bottom portion of the income distribution is shifted into the middle category. At present a small proportion of the total population earns a great deal of money (the highest fifth earns around 40 percent of all family income). A very large proportion of all families earns a moderate income (the second, middle, and fourth fifths earn roughly 55 percent of all family incomes). The lowest fifth, on the other hand, earns very little (around 5 percent). The current income distribution has the shape of a diamond. The only radical strategy worthy of the name must be designed to change income distribution in such a way that it assumes the shape of a pyramid—through moving the bottom fifth into one of the middle categories. This will not bring income equality, but at least it will insure that the 20 percent or so of our population now effectively denied full citizenship will have a secure basis from which to lay the foundations for social and political participation.

Service vs. Income Strategies

LEE RAINWATER, on whose work, as well as that of S. M. Miller, I have largely relied in this paper,[1] argues persuasively that basically there are only two strategies for dealing with poverty: the *service strategy* and the *income strategy*. The first, which has been dominant up till now, means viewing the poor as a group of people in need of special aids and services financed by the rest of the population and provided and administered by a welfare bureaucracy. It would be foolish to deny that, compared to the days of *laissez faire*, this approach has been a tremendous step forward. It institutionalized the idea that the total community as well as the government must carry a responsibility for the well-being of all citizens, a well-being that cannot be left to the vagaries of the market. Yet it is by now evident that the service approach has failed to bring about structural changes in the distribution of income. It has helped many of the poor, it may even have enabled many to escape poverty altogether, but it has perpetuated the *condition* of poverty.

Services, though they may have other beneficial consequences, can do little to reduce the overall extent of poverty. A single example: in 1968 the New York Communities Aid Association published a report entitled "The Multiple Problem Dilemma" in which it gave an account of a two-and-a-half-year special-service program for multiple-problem families. Fifty of these families received special and extensive care by highly trained social workers. An equal number of families with comparable problems were given only routine service. Yet both groups showed almost identical developments. The study director concluded with rare candor: *"You cannot casework poor people out of poverty."*

A major reason, and perhaps the major reason, why such programs fail or even become counterproductive is that the service approach reinforces and perpetuates the dependent status of the poor. By providing services to the poor, the social worker contributes in effect to putting them into a special category of second-class citizens and thereby helps to stamp upon them a stigmatized status.[2]

[1] Cf., among other works of these authors, S. M. Miller and Pamela Roby, *The Future of Inequality*, New York: Basic Books, 1970, and Lee Rainwater, "The Service Strategy vs. the Income Strategy" in Fred R. Harris, ed., *Social Science and National Policy*, Chicago: Aldine, 1970.

[2] In the following I have drawn on two of my previously published papers: "The Sociology of

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To receive assistance means to be removed from the ordinary run of men. Once a person is assigned to the status of the assisted poor his role in life is changed, just as the career of the mental patient is changed by the very fact that he is designated a mental patient. Assisted poverty, no matter how well-intentioned the persons who provide assistance may be, involves a status degradation through which, in Harold Garfinkel's words, "the public identity of an actor is transformed into something looked on as lower in the local scheme of social types." Let me give a few illustrations:

Nearly all groups in society can use a variety of legitimate mechanisms to shield their behavior from observation by others; society recognizes a right to privacy, that is, to conceal parts of one's behavior from public scrutiny. Yet this right is denied to the poor. At least in principle, facets of behavior ordinarily not public are in their case under public control and are open to examination by social workers or other investigators. For even to be socially recognized as "poor," a person is obliged to make his private life available to public inspection. The protective veil that other members of society can put between themselves and the outer world is then explicitly denied him.

Where other recipients of social services may occasionally be visited at home by investigators, most of their contact with the agency is likely to be in its offices. Generally, in modern society, the exercise of authority—except within the family—is separated from the home. With regard to the poor on relief, however, this is not the case. They are typically being investigated at home and hence have much less chance to conceal their private affairs from welfare observers. Because it prevents the usual stage management for visits by outsiders, such an invasion of home territory is necessarily experienced as humiliating.

When money is allocated to members of any other status groups, they have the freedom to dispose of it in almost any way they see fit. Here again the treatment of the poor differs sharply. They are denied free disposition of the money granted them. They must account to the donors for their expenses, and the donors decide whether the money is spent "wisely" or "foolishly." That is, insofar as they are treated much like children who have to account to parents for the use of pocket money, the poor are infantilized.

In the very process, then, of being helped and assisted, the poor are assigned to a special career that impairs their relations with others. Social workers, welfare investigators, welfare administrators, and local volunteer workers seek out the poor in order to help them, yet, paradoxically, are the very agents of their degradation. Subjective intentions and institutional consequences sharply diverge. Even when the help is given from the most benevolent of motives, the very fact of being helped becomes a token of degradation.

Far from aiming to equalize life chances and citizenship rights between the well-to-do and the poor, the service strategy perpetuates inequality. As the dean of British sociology T. H. Marshall once put it, "The common purpose of statutory and voluntary effort was to abate the nuisance of poverty without disturbing the pattern of inequality of which poverty was the most obvious unpleasant consequence."

Patterns of equality in social affairs are established when men deal with others under conditions of reciprocity, that is, when services supplied can be reciprocated. Autonomy and independence is assured to the extent to which benefits received do not exceed services rendered. But the *service strategy,* by its very nature, fosters not reciprocity but unilateral dependence based on asymmetry of power. The poor must approach as supplicants those who have it in

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Poverty," *Social Problems,* XIII, 2 (Fall 1965), and "Unanticipated Conservative Consequences of Liberal Theorizing," *Social Problems,* XVI, 3 (Winter 1969).

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their power to relieve some of their misery. By definition they are receivers of benefits who are in no position to reciprocate. Welfare personnel, on the other hand, by supplying services to the poor, establish power over them. They render needed services that cannot be had elsewhere so that the recipients become obligated to them. Hence relations of unilateral dependence come into existence, which are at fundamental variance with the rights deriving from equal participation and citizenship in the society at large. And not only are the poor seen by others as belonging to a special stigmatized category, they also tend to see themselves as others see them. Hence assistance and the service strategy perpetuate the conditions they are designed to alleviate. In an instrumentally oriented society, those who cannot give but only receive are naturally assigned the lowest status.

The Working Poor

So far I have dealt only with the assisted poor, but these are in fact only a minority of the total poor population. While there are about 8 million assisted poor in contemporary America, between 40 and 50 million fell below the poverty or near-poverty level in the late sixties. Millions of people are poor by any standard, despite the fact that they work full-time throughout the year; 25 percent of all poor families (including 8 million persons) are headed by men gainfully occupied for the full working year. These large numbers of families and individuals are, of course, not reached at all by the *service strategy*. They are assumed to be able to take care of themselves. Yet the fact is that they often lead lives just as helpless as those on public assistance. Possessing limited skills, cooped up in areas where the labor market provides no opportunities, they desperately try to hang on to an aura of respectability while knowing only too well that the jobs they perform seldom allow them to gain status and respect. The sociologist Everett C. Hughes has remarked that, "A man's work is as good a clue as any to the course of his life, and to his social being and identity." When a man's job does not insure him a decent income and is looked upon with contempt by his fellows, it can only provide him with a negative identity. In this respect the working poor find themselves in a situation not too dissimilar from that of the assisted poor, even though they try desperately to distinguish themselves from them. That the *service strategy* in effect bypasses these huge numbers of men altogether is a further mark of its inadequacy and irrelevance. In an earlier period when the aim of social policy was simply to assist paupers, the *service strategy* made some sense; but it is not in tune with the requirements of our age. Today large-scale income redistribution is on the agenda.

The underlying assumption of the *service strategy* is that the poor need assistance because, unlike the rest of the population, they are unable to make the relevant choices by themselves. The underlying assumption of the *income strategy* is, on the contrary, that what the poor really want is to make their own choices as they see fit. It is based on the notion that the poor are not so very different from the rest of us: *they only have less money*.

I will leave to economists a detailed discussion of the relative merits of a variety of redistribution schemes that have been brought forward in recent years. Whether a negative income tax or another form of income maintenance and support program is adopted does not concern us here. But the principle should be clear: whatever the scheme, the task is to develop a set of economic programs insuring poor families and individuals a basic floor of income not too far removed from the median income of American families as a whole.

There is no doubt in my mind that a great deal of the social pathology now proliferating among the poor would be resolved through an adequate provision of income. At the risk of being taxed with sociological

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naiveté by social scientific brethren, I would still maintain that what the poor lack above all is money. We therefore need a provision of adequate income for those unable to work and an income maintenance program for those who, because of conditions in the labor market, cannot gain an adequate income.

I am aware of the very special problems that arise in many lower-class families from the lack of authority or the complete absence of fathers and the ensuing pathological matrifocality. But I am also convinced that a man with an adequate income will be much less likely to abandon his family than one whose sense of self-esteem is continually undermined by casual work or by unilateral dependence on public assistance.

In a culture such as ours, which still basically judges a man according to his occupational status, it stands to reason that simple transfers of income to those among the poor who are able to work is not a permanent answer. Even when a man is no longer stigmatized by his dependence on public assistance, even when he has a right to income maintenance as well-established as social-security benefits, he will still not escape social blame as well as self-blame if he lacks a rewarding and productive job. That is why, for those among the poor who are able to work, a secure job is as important as an adequate income. The fact is, however, that rewarding jobs are likely to come into reach only after immediate worries about current income are relieved. Job training and the development of technical competence can be pursued only when the economic insecurity and anxiety that now mark the poor have at least in part been removed. A man dependent on casual work of an unskilled sort is not likely to have the inclination, time or energy to train himself for new kinds of employment. When immediate worries about income have been removed, when elementary needs have been gratified, it becomes psychologically much easier to prepare for more skillful and hence more rewarding employment. An income strategy should therefore aim at more than simply redistributing income. Ultimately it should be a means to the wider end of creating valued occupational and social positions for those who were formerly casual unskilled laborers or passive recipients of assistance.

This is not the place to spell out the measures that would seem necessary in order to assure that an adequate number of positions is available so as to provide opportunities for all who need them. What is needed is a structural approach counteracting the tendency for unemployment to be much higher among the unskilled than among the skilled occupations. This would involve large-scale federal programs insuring not only very low unemployment rates (reducing unemployment by 1 percentage point would reduce the number of persons in poverty by 1.25 million), but guarantees of entry into the labor force for the unskilled as well as guarantees of on-the-job-training so as to enable the unskilled gradually to move up into skilled categories. It would involve high minimum wages, and federal incentives to employers to retain or even enlarge their labor force rather than replacing expensive manpower by labor-saving devices before the work force has been trained in higher skills. It would entail the creation of a vast number of paraprofessional jobs in schools and hospitals. It would entail the creation of many new jobs in the general area of public employment to counteract the present tendency of neglecting public expenditures so as to enhance the private consumption of middle-class voters. (Think only, as S. M. Miller suggests, how many jobs could be created in the sanitation departments of major cities if lower-class neighborhoods were given services equal to those of higher-class areas.)

Lest I be misunderstood, let me stress that I am not in favor of make-work programs that provide socially unnecessary jobs for the unskilled in order to take them off the streets. Nothing seems to me as degrad-

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ing for people as to be employed in work that they know is useless. You only have to watch the demeanor of the many persons in the Eastern bloc countries who are employed in raking leaves or sweeping sidewalks to realize that this way of disguising unemployment is deeply humiliating. More generally, when men know that unskilled work to which they are assigned could as well be performed by machines, they often feel such work to be degrading. Washing dishes by hand in the restaurants of the past was a perfectly normal job; washing dishes by hand when mechanical dishwashers are readily available is something else again. The need is not make-work for the unskilled, or to slow technical progress in order to provide jobs. It is, rather, to allow the unskilled to upgrade their skills so that they can work with machines that produce results about which they can feel some satisfaction.

Emphasis on the unskilled and the necessary upgrading of skills need not make us lose sight of the fact that in contemporary American society there exists a large, and growing, category of people who have been so demoralized and pathologized by their social conditions that they cannot, in fact, avail themselves of job opportunities.

John Wayne on Welfare

A California Congressman has suggested that actor John Wayne was a "welfare recipient" of sorts in getting a $218,000 farm subsidy from the government.

Rep. Glenn M. Anderson, D.-Calif., said in a House speech that Wayne, long "a vocal critic of the welfare program," had "turned to the federal treasury to supplement his income."

"The woman on welfare with three or four children who has been given such a going-over recently for 'getting something for nothing' must be shaking her head quizzically when she reads about these wealthy dirt farmers who receive such high payments from the federal treasury," Anderson said.

UAW Washington Report,
July 12, 1971

What I have in mind here are not so much the physically handicapped—their case is largely unproblematic—but rather those who suffer from overpowering psychic handicaps. In the wilderness of every modern city tens of thousands of persons, perhaps many more, have become a kind of permanent underclass or lumpen proletariat that is likely to remain with us no matter what antipoverty strategies are adopted. These people, often under the influence of drugs of various sorts, have become so apathetic and withdrawn from the public scene that they are not likely to be reached by any of these measures. Income maintenance programs may alleviate some of their immediate plights, but it is unlikely that they will lead them to abandon their way of life. The mark of degradation is too deeply ingrained in their psychic structure.

When it comes to this class of men, the limits of public policy may have been reached. They are likely to remain permanent victims of modern society, a vivid reminder of the high price at which modern urban society has made its ambiguous progress. As such they deserve sympathy, understanding, and, above all, tolerance from the ranks of those who have succeeded in carving a more secure niche for themselves. No measure of repression can eliminate them from the social scene, and no appeals to "law and order" offer any effective way of dealing with them. It is possible, I think, to "save" many of their children so that their condition does not become hereditary. But as to most of them, the best that can probably be done is to see to it that they live their dismal lives as free from harassment and direct need as possible.

The "Culture of Poverty"

THOUGH OFTEN advanced by writers whose motivations are impeccable, it still seems to me that the notion of a "culture of poverty," bandied about so much in recent years, is a fundamentally mischievous idea. When such writers claim that, far from participating in

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a common culture, the poor have developed a culture of their own that sets them fundamentally apart from the majority of the population, then, whether they intend it or not, they create the impression that the members of that culture are somehow alien beings who cannot be assimilated and hence must remain beyond the pale.

The notion of a "culture of poverty" creates the impression that, no matter what strategy is adopted, the poor will continue to live in a world of their own, as unassimilated and unassimilable pariahs. This is dangerous nonsense. It is, of course, true that the poor have been forced to make a number of serious adjustments in their life styles in order to subsist at all. But there is a major difference between such adaptations to conditions not of one's own choosing and a culture that is a way of life. A way of life may be adhered to despite poverty, as in the case of the Jews in the *shtetl;* but poverty as such creates no culture.

The notion of culture implies a desired and valued way of life. It is rooted in the idea that men belonging to a culture are devoted to it because it embodies for them prized qualities and virtues. But how can a culture of poverty be valued and desired? Except among religious ascetics, poverty is not a positive virtue. To be sure, deprived persons may present a variety of characteristics that distinguish them from the more fortunate, but they do not choose these characteristics and are not themselves likely to consider them desirable. They are in fact the mark of their oppression. It is only among certain romantic primitivists that life styles from which the lower classes suffer are transmuted into admirable and admired characteristics.

It is one thing to defend the right to diversity in life styles where such divergent and nonconformist patterns have been freely chosen—as among contemporary youth—but it is quite another to defend a situation where such divergencies have in fact been imposed by those who occupy a superior position in society. I know of no evidence to indicate that women who are the heads of matrifocal families in the lower classes desire such positions of their own free choice. They have been forced into them by desertion, by divorce, or by the persistent pressures of male unemployment, the vagaries of the job market for the unskilled, and the inhuman stipulations of current welfare policies. It is deeply offensive to liken, say, Italian subcultural preferences for pasta to alleged lower-class "preferences" for female-dominated households or serial marriage. These are conditions from which the poor *suffer* precisely because in their essential cultural makeup they do not differ fundamentally from the rest of the American population.

Certain intellectuals seem to have a perennial tendency to hunt for noble savages that can be contrasted to the alleged vices of modern civilization. It would be preferable if they were to limit their search to nonliterate tribes. Romantic admiration for the natives of Upper Dahomey is not likely to have many social repercussions in the life of these people, but the glorification of an alleged "culture of poverty" in our own midst could act as a self-fulfilling prediction. If the poor have indeed cultural characteristics fundamentally at variance with those of the rest of society, then it is of little avail to attempt to eradicate poverty by an income or any other strategy. If policy-makers listen to such vicious advice and refrain from action to eradicate poverty and redistribute income, then indeed the poor will continue to be with us. In any case, an overemphasis on the alleged adaptive functions of the "culture of poverty" can only deter us from taking the needed radical measures to change the opportunity structure and the income distribution of contemporary America. The *status quo* can only be bolstered by attributing some kind of glamour to a way of life, if poverty can be called that, which requires nothing less than radical abolition.

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Sanford Gottlieb

A State Within a State

What is the Military-Industrial Complex?

For where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also.
—Matthew 6:21

THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX today commands power far beyond the measure it knew when President Eisenhower warned in his Farewell Address of 1961 against its "unwarranted influence."

Its clout at the end of the sixties could be measured by a few figures.[1] Americans were spending an annual average of $400 each on "defense." The military was receiving half of each federal tax dollar (excluding the costs of past wars) and more than half the funds spent in the nation on research. Then 5 million men and women were serving in the armed forces and as civilian employees of the Pentagon, and 4 million were working in defense industries, with millions more economically dependent upon them. The Defense Department deployed 339 lobbyists on Capitol Hill and more than 6,000 public relations men in the U.S. and abroad. Between the end of World War II and 1969, a total of 1 trillion dollars was spent on the military—a major part during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

This massive investment not only purchased the most destructive military machine in history; it also animated an institution new to American life, the military-industrial complex. The complex is a web of political and economic relationships among defense industries and associations, the military and civilian leadership in the Pentagon, the Atomic Energy Commission, that part of Congress which deals with the interests of the military, some labor unions, universities,[2] "think tanks" heavily dependent upon military expenditures, and the organizations of veterans, reservists, and superpatriots which define their role of promoting "peace through [armed] strength."

The leaders of the complex are not hard to find. On August 12, 1970, the ballroom of the Washington Hilton Hotel was filled with them, at a three-hour luncheon of 1,150 generals, congressmen, and defense contractors to honor the late Congressman Mendel Rivers, then chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. The affair was sponsored by the Washington Chapter of the Air Force Association. Among the treats were: music by several Air Force bands; a demonstration by the Army's Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps; a 15-page printed program in red, white, and blue, listing 75 defense-oriented firms whose "cooperation"

[1] From Sen. Edward Kennedy, "National Priorities and the Defense Budget: The Need for New Realities," *Congressional Record*, February 26, 1970; Richard F. Kaufman, "As Eisenhower was Saying . . . 'We Must Guard Against Unwarranted Influence by the Military-Industrial Complex,'" *New York Times Magazine*, June 22, 1969. Seymour Melman, *Pentagon Capitalism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970).

[2] The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been among the 100 top contractors for years, ranking 67th in the fiscal year 1969 as the result of Pentagon contracts totaling $100.5 million, according to the Defense Department.

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or "participation" made the gathering possible, and a speech by Vice-President Spiro Agnew. The latter praised Rivers for his "willingness to go to bat for the so-called and often discredited military-industrial complex." Agnew said he wanted "to lay to rest the ugly, vicious, dastardly rumors" that Rivers "is trying to move the Pentagon piecemeal to South Carolina." South Carolina has indeed been the seat of many military installations, but Chairman Rivers also permitted some important pieces of the complex to move to Massachusetts, Connecticut, Texas, California, Washington, and Alaska. Abundance fosters generosity.

Although he did not spin this web, the President is, in effect, the spider who sits astride it. That the President sometimes finds this posture uncomfortable in no way diminishes his power to rearrange the strands. If he tries to abandon the web, however, he can expect massive resistance, for too many careers are wound up in it.

The military-industrial complex is a mid-twentieth-century institution. In the past there obviously have been American military establishments, defense industries, war-hawk congressmen, and superpatriotic organizations. But until the 1950s and 1960s there never was such an interlocking directorate as presides today over a key juncture of the public and private sectors of the economy. It disburses vast sums for production and research, extends its influence to "every city, every statehouse, every office of the Federal Government" (as described by President Eisenhower), dominates American foreign policy, and even assumes for itself the right to spy on the political activities of private citizens and public officials.

THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX has become something like a state within the state.

Part bureaucratic, part industrial, the complex is a network in which even the closest observers fail to detect where government ends and the corporation begins. Indeed, the complex has led to a wholly new form of corporation: a government-created, government-subsidized hybrid earning private profits from the tax coffers and unprepared to compete for commercial markets.

Defense industry is fed by the state, and the state by defense industry. In the process, the military-industrial complex assumes a self-perpetuating momentum of its own, resisting control from any quarter, public or private. This explains in part why strong public opposition to the war in Indochina, to high levels of military spending, and to worldwide military commitments has not been translated into basic changes of governmental policy.

The complex first grew up in response to America's emergence as a major power after World War II and the Cold War that followed. Its institutional foundations were laid by a memorandum on "Scientific and Technological Resources as Military Assets" from Army Chief of Staff Dwight Eisenhower in April 1946,[3] and by the National Security Act of 1947, which unified the armed services, coordinated military research and industrial production, and established the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency.[4]

The National Security Council, which brought together the secretary of state and the civilian and military chiefs of the Pentagon to advise the president, represented the institutionalized fusion of military and foreign-policy interests. It reflects the twin premises of the Cold War: military power is the primary component of national security; the United States must defend the "free world" against aggressive Communism.

These premises, in turn, had their source in a confluence of conditions dating from 1942–47: the successful wartime collaboration between American industry and the

[3] Published in full in Melman, *Pentagon Capitalism, op. cit.*, pp. 231–34.

[4] See *The Pentagon Watchers,* Leonard S. Rodberg and Derek Shearer, eds. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday Anchor, 1970), pp. 10–13.

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military; a heady sense of power in Washington after defeat of the Axis and the start of the atomic era; and the mix of business bias with messianic idealism in the American political leadership. The military-mindedness of civilians was then, and still remains, a far greater force than the military itself.

In pursuit of the cold-war version of national security, American decision-makers pressed single-mindedly for ever-greater armed might. Members of Congress became conditioned to the automatc "aye" vote whenever the executive branch and the chairmen of the powerful Armed Services Committees discovered another "foreign threat" and recommended another military alliance or another weapons system. Military conscription, approved by the narrowest of margins in 1940, was considered a permanent institution by most Americans only a generation later. In the course of this process, Congress abdicated many of its powers, and the executive branch emerged as the primary force in American government. Since congressmen so willingly granted the Pentagon whatever it wished, canny legislators successfully financed civilian programs in scientific research and education with Defense Department funds.

The economy, too, was altered by the addition of an ingredient that accelerated the militarization of American society and foreign policy. Whole new industries such as aerospace, and new corporate giants such as General Dynamics were nurtured on huge defense contracts, most of them negotiated directly rather than subjected to the risks of competitive bidding, with their way smoothed by the free use of government land and equipment and by tax write-offs for glossy advertisements touting their new, sophisticated products. Some of the products of this industrial hybrid were designed to reach the moon, most to reach the Soviet Union and China.

In 1960, less than a year before he became President Kennedy's science adviser, Jerome Wiesner wrote in *Daedalus* that U.S. Army and Navy studies concluded that 200 relatively secure seaborne missiles on each side would constitute an adequate nuclear deterrent. By the end of the decade, the United States could launch 4,200 long-range nuclear warheads; the U.S.S.R., 2,000. According to former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, 400 of these weapons could annihilate a third of the Soviet population. Overkill entered our vocabulary.

SINCE DEFENSE IS TODAY defined in terms of deterrence, it is impossible to judge whether the protection of the United States during this period did indeed require such an awesome force. One can always claim that the Minuteman and Titan missiles and the B-52s (which, until the Kennedy administration, tested Soviet defenses by flying directly toward the U.S.S.R. and veering away within a few miles of the border) deterred a Soviet attack. One *cannot* claim, however, that these weapons of mass destruction—buttressed by tens of thousands of tactical nuclear weapons, a two-ocean navy, conventional forces, chemical and biological warfare agents, 3,000 military bases, and more than 40 military alliances—prevented a long guerrilla war in Southeast Asia or conflicts in the Middle East, or that they stopped the Russians from repressing the Hungarian revolt or the Czechoslovak liberalization, or halted the establishment of a Communist regime in the Western Hemisphere. Clearly, the American people were paying high prices for uncertain service.

One by-product of the pursuit of security through military means has been increased secrecy in foreign policy. It was not until October 1970, for example, that the American public learned that the United States had entered into an unpublicized agreement in 1960 to support a 40,000-man Ethiopian army and to oppose any threats to the territorial integrity of Ethiopia. The decade of aid was worth $147 million to the Ethiopian government, in return for permission to construct a large electronics

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eavesdropping base at Kagnew Station, Asmara. This agreement and other secret commitments by the executive branch came to light only through the careful work of a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee chaired by Stuart Symington.

Similarly, the public was unaware that the Johnson administration had followed a "2½-wars-at-once strategy" until former Budget Director Charles Schultze returned to private life and spoke out. This strategy was based on the novel notion that the United States should have the capability of simultaneously fighting conventional land wars in Europe and Asia and a guerrilla war somewhere in the "Third World," while holding its nuclear power in reserve. Less ambitious, the Nixon administration cut back to 1½ wars.

Whatever its effects on the international scene, the trillion-dollar investment in the military fueled a huge industrial pyramid at home. The number of prime defense contractors soared to 22,000, served by 100,000 subcontractors. Yet the top 100 contractors received about 65 percent of the contracts awarded in 1967. Between 1960 and 1967, 38 companies received more than $1 billion each in prime military contracts. Lockheed led the parade with a seven-year total of $10.6 billion. While defense contracts spread throughout American industry, the giant contractors took the biggest slice of the pie.[5]

The system of procurement in defense industry has provided high profits at low risk to the corporations, while passing along tremendous cost overruns to the taxpayers. Lavish government subsidies, a tendency to deal directly with a single contractor rather than engage in competitive bidding, and permissiveness toward shoddy performance led to a total of almost $24 billion in cost overruns on 38 weapons systems as of March 31, 1970. According to Gordon Rule, a civilian procurement official for the Pentagon in 1968, "No matter how poor the quality, how late the product and how high the cost, [defense contractors] know nothing will happen to them." [6] The government has a consistent record of extricating them from difficulties.

An incestuous relationship between military procurement officers and their civilian counterparts in defense firms also contributes to high prices and high profits. Upon retirement, many military regulars go to work for the big contractors, and many top officials in the defense firms advance their careers by shuttling to civilian jobs in the Pentagon before returning to government-subsidized corporate life. President Nixon named one top defense-firm official, David Packard, to the second highest post in the Defense Department.

In response to a request from Senator William Proxmire, chairman of the Subcommittee on Economy in Government of the Joint Economic Committee, the Pentagon released in February 1969 a list of 2,072 retired regular military officers who were employed by the 95 biggest defense contractors. The 10 firms employing the largest number had 1,065 on their payrolls, an average of 106 each and triple the average number they had employed a decade earlier.

Former military officers thus enter positions in which they may negotiate defense contracts with friends and old associates. In addition, according to Senator Proxmire, "there is the subtle or unconscious temptation to the officer still on active duty. After all, he can see that over 2,000 of his fellow officers work for the big companies. How hard a bargain does he drive with them when he is one or two years away from retirement?"

The 16 research centers supported by Pentagon funds also provide opportunities for career advancement. In 1968, seven presidents and five vice-presidents of these "think tanks" had previously held high positions in the Defense Department. The best paid

[5] The figures in this paragraph are from Kaufman, *op. cit.*, and Melman, *op. cit.*

[6] Quoted by Kaufman, *op. cit.*

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was the $90,000-a-year president of the Aerospace Corporation, an offshoot of the Air Force.[7]

The public has no means of knowing the true size of defense profits. No comprehensive study has been done, especially of the giant firms that receive most of the contract awards. The big corporation that sells an entire weapons system to the Pentagon makes much higher profits than the smaller firm that sells soldiers' shirts, but no one knows how much higher. Furthermore, the corporations that sell to both the Pentagon and civilian markets add to the problem by refusing to reveal financial records for the two different kinds of work.

EVEN IF THE DEFENSE FIRMS' financial records were opened to public scrutiny, the hidden benefits would not necessarily show. For while the free use of government land and equipment surely contributes to corporate profits, it does not appear on the books. The government makes "progress payments" for expenses incurred rather than work performed, so the defense companies often do not have to borrow working capital. The sheer volume of sales to the Pentagon helps the contractors establish credit and maintain their work force. Moreover, when a contractor is paid for a cost overrun, he may use the money for a variety of purposes (including more luxurious offices or bigger expense accounts), although these payments are not called profits.

Occasionally, the informed observer glimpses part of the reality. Such a glimpse proves that a truer picture is revealed when defense profits are calculated as a percentage of return on the contractor's often minimal investment rather than as a percentage of the government-paid cost. Richard Kaufman, a highly competent staff economist on Senator Proxmire's subcommittee has explained the difference:

> An example of the difference was demonstrated in a 1962 tax court case, North American Aviation *vs.* Renegotiation Board. The contracts provided for 8 percent profits as a percentage of costs; the tax court found that the company had realized profits of 612 percent and 802 percent on its investment in two succeeding years. The reason for the huge return on investment was the Defense Department policy of supplying both fixed and working capital to many of the larger contractors. In some cases the amount of government-owned property exceeds the contractors' investment.[8]

Military research and production have spread far beyond the hybrid firms that sell most of their products to Washington. Long-established companies in the private sector, literally household names, operate largely invisible military sidelines. General Electric makes reentry vehicles for MIRV, the hydra-headed missile that will generate chronic fear of surprise attack in an adversary's military establishment. GE also happens to be the third largest defense contractor. The Bulova Watch Company manufactures parts for projectiles. Whirlpool and General Motors are engaged in the projectile business. Motorola makes components for 40mm. grenade launchers and classified military electronic equipment. Honeywell's thermostats are for friendly civilian customers; its antipersonnel weapons, torpedoes, and Poseidon missile parts are for the enemy. Dow Chemical has abandoned napalm; now it produces herbicides and nose assemblies for bombs.

But even the wealthiest nation in the world has finite resources. It required the cumulative effect of the Vietnam war on top of cold-war expenditures to teach the lesson that finally this country cannot have both guns and butter—at least, not without wage-and-price controls and still higher taxes. But that lesson has just begun to come home to the American public.

The trillion-dollar investment in the military has deprived the public of both material and human resources. The steel used for missiles was not available for housing. The

[7] Kaufman, *op. cit.*

[8] *Ibid.*

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scientists who developed the nuclear-powered missile-launching submarine were not available to develop antipollution devices. Together, the lack of funds and skills depleted the public sector at the very time the country's social and racial problems were growing more volatile. And the diversion of these resources to the military did nothing to enhance the nation's will to meet its internal problems.

The results are seen most starkly in the field of health. While the United States ranks first in the world in gross national product and military spending, it is 23rd from the top in infant mortality and 11th in the number of physicians per inhabitant. Nor is it coincidental that the country with the highest productivity rate per employee—Japan—has spent the smallest share of its gross national product on the military, while the United States, which has spent more than eight times as much as Japan on the military in percentage of GNP, has a rate of productivity only one-third as great.

The shortage of available brainpower is probably more devastating to American society than even the lack of material resources. Steel can be shifted easily to civilian use, but scientists, engineers, and managers who have spent years working under the conditions that prevail in defense industry may require considerable retraining before they can perform tasks relevant to the satisfaction of human needs.

When the Kerner Commission issued its report following the explosions in the ghettos in 1967, it attached no cost estimates to its recommendations for programs to provide more housing, education, health care, jobs, and transportation for black Americans. Later, Hyman Bookbinder, a former official of the Office of Employment Opportunity, estimated that it would require $50 billion a year for 20 years to implement the Commission's recommendations. This estimate happens to equal the sum invested in the military during the lifetime of the postwar generation.

THE FIRST ORGANIZED CITIZENS' ATTACK on military spending was launched in 1969. The attack was spurred by growing public disenchantment with the Vietnam war, high taxes, inflation, cost overruns, and such military blunders as the accidental killing of 6,400 sheep in Utah by nerve gas and the designation of the Seattle, Chicago, and Boston suburbs as sites for the Administration's proposed antiballistic missile program.

In the Senate, the campaign, led by Senators John Sherman Cooper and Philip Hart, focused for months on halting ABM. When the vote was cast in August, the opposition failed by only one vote to stop a major new weapons system. For the first time since the nuclear test-ban debate, the relationship between weaponry and national security reentered the public dialogue. Yet, once the Senate vote on ABM was past, opposition to other military measures largely dissipated. The challengers had not yet developed the staying power of the complex.

In the House, the opposition was spearheaded by a dissident group of five members of the Armed Services Committee. Meeting for the first time on June 10, 1969, Democrats Robert Leggett, Lucien Nedzi, and Otis Pike, and Republicans Charles Whalen and Robert Stafford sought a unified approach to such problems as military redundancy and marginal programs. After discussions among themselves and with specialists, they sent Chairman Rivers a letter outlining their goals. Rivers's answer to the "Fearless Five," as they became known, was to have his staff draw up the military authorization bill and refuse to show it to the dissidents until the evening before it appeared in committee. The five then prepared nine amendments. Each amendment was granted 30–60 seconds of discussion in committee. One amendment was ultimately adopted on the House floor.

While the legislative victories by the dissidents in both houses were exceedingly slim, the pressure did succeed in convincing the House Appropriations Committee to cut $1 billion from the bill and in moving the Ad-

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ministration to trim its chemical-bacteriological warfare program.

During the debate in the House, some of the "Fearless Five" worked with Members of Congress for Peace Through Law (MCPL), a bipartisan, bicameral group founded by former Senator Joseph Clark (D.-Pa.). For the first time, MCPL hired professional staff to service its members for the military debate. The beginnings of coordination among the opposition in both houses was thus established.

Four months before the first meeting of the "Fearless Five," the Coalition on National Priorities and Military Policy was born in Washington. Built on earlier efforts at coordination by voluntary organizations, the Coalition mobilized religious, peace, labor, scientific, and social-action groups in the fight against ABM and mindless military spending. Under the leadership of Joseph Clark and the Washington staff members of its affiliates, the Coalition became an important counterweight to the military-industrial complex.

Faced with a new antimilitarist mood in Congress and the country, as well as severe budgetary pressures caused by anticipated deficits, the Nixon administration cut further into the military budget, adopted the rhetoric of "new priorities," and elaborated a new military strategy.

In presenting the fiscal year 1971 budget to Congress, including somewhat reduced military expenditures of $73.6 billion, the Nixon administration claimed that it was in the process of reordering national priorities. Not only were the savings from a diminishing conflict in Vietnam being channeled into programs of human need, it said, but more of the budget dollar (41 percent) would be spent on "human resources" than on national defense (36 percent). Thanks to a detailed analysis by Senator Mark Hatfield, the Administration's deceitful use of budget figures was revealed in an address by the Oregon Republican to a town meeting in Corvallis on February 10, 1970. The executive branch achieved its figures of 41 percent for human resources, Hatfield explained, by including under this category the expenditures for such trust funds as social security and railroad retirement (which Congress, as a caretaker, is in no position to touch), all payments for veterans benefits, and even the costs of operating the Selective Service System.

After Hatfield excluded the trust funds from current governmental expenditures, placed veterans payments as well as the interest on the national debt under the category of the costs of past wars, moved the expenditures for the draft system into the military column, and made other adjustments, his figures looked far different from the Administration's. The true picture of the fiscal 1971 budget, according to Hatfield, was: 48.4 percent for current military expenditures; 16.4 percent for the costs of past wars; 17 percent for human resources, and 18.2 percent for all other expenditures including agriculture, commerce, etc. Very little had changed except the rhetoric.

The Nixon Pentagon prepared for a long-term shift in strategy that would cut costs in manpower while bolstering its firepower. Since general-purpose forces (infantry divisions and the nonnuclear navy and aircraft) consume two-thirds of the military dollar, the Nixon administration intends to cut back troops and bases overseas.[9] The Administration will explain this shift primarily in terms of a defense-policy review that has resulted in a modified assessment of the Communist threat on land. It will ask allies to share more of the defense burden and is prepared to grant them increased military assistance. This will result in a new reduction in expenditures for conventional forces.

At the same time, however, the Nixon Pentagon plans to increase conventional firepower and to expand strategic nuclear forces to include MIRVs on land- and sea-based missiles, a supersonic bomber (B-1) to replace the B-52, the antiballistic missile sys-

[9] See Juan Cameron, "The Armed Forces' Reluctant Retrenchment," *Fortune*, November 1970.

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tem (unless limited by an accord with the Soviet Union), an underwater missile system (ULMS), and a new airborne continental defense system (AWACS). If all of these sophisticated strategic weapons are developed and deployed, the cost will far overshadow the savings expected to result from a reduction in manpower. The mere cost of the weapons systems approved by the end of 1970 (not including the B-1, ULMS and AWACS) would amount to a minimum of $22 billion—plus $25 billion to buy and operate the F-14 Navy fighter intercepter for a 10-year period!

The bigger, more modern defense contractors who make up the vital center of the military-industrial complex have thus laid claim to any "peace dividend" in the 1970s, while the smaller components of the complex struggle to hold what they have.

WE CAN ANTICIPATE that this claim will not go unchallenged. There will be a three-way competition during the 1970s for the resources of the public sector. The complex and its ideological supporters, the pressure groups for peace and new priorities, and those who would solve all public problems by reducing taxes to stimulate private consumption will vie for the tax dollar. The outcome of this competition will determine whether the military-industrial complex can be controlled and, ultimately, overcome.

The case for the military-minded was argued by Deputy Director of Defense David Packard at the annual convention of the Instrument Society of America on October 26, 1970:

> Clearly, the world is no less hostile than it has been. In fact, the threat of conflict and violence is, if anything, increasing. The Soviet Union has been building up its development and production of military weapons. At the present time the Soviet build-up of strategic nuclear forces and naval forces is more rapid than it has ever been. One can hardly deny that forces of subversion and revolution inside the boundaries of many free world countries are expanding at an alarming rate, not only in traditionally troubled areas like the Middle East, but even right here at home in the United States, in Canada, and in South America.

Then, after estimating that the United States is "from two to four years ahead of the Soviet Union in every important area of weapons technology," Packard defined his fears for the future:

> If we ever lose the lead we now have in all major areas of military technology, we will inevitably face the prospect of having to accept a Sputnik not just in one or two unimportant areas now and then, but the prospect of a Sputnik in every important area of military weapons, in strategic nuclear forces, in naval forces, and in conventional ground forces. No responsible administration official nor any member of Congress can afford, in my opinion, to take that gamble with the future security of our nation and the future safety of our people.

An unspoken thought in this presentation was the political calculation of the effects of unemployment. In the previous year, 2 million workers had been added to the ranks of the jobless. Many had been employees of defense industries and the Pentagon, as well as members of the armed services. The Nixon administration failed to plan adequately to cushion the effects of defense cutbacks on these individuals and their communities. Simultaneously, it sought their votes at election time. One way to reduce the political gamble woud be to limit defense-industry cutbacks.

ANOTHER CONSTITUENCY, however, had a different view of the security of our nation and the safety of our people. Concerned with peace and a new set of priorities, it included many of the well-educated and affluent professionals, academics, housewives, and students who had supported Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy in 1968, reinforced more recently by a circle of the ecology-

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minded. Some were active in pressure groups working for peace, quality education, mass transportation, adequate housing, and a clean environment. Others were businessmen aroused over the increasingly depleted central cities. In the late 1960s, they watched the ghettos burn although no enemy missiles had penetrated our defenses. They breathed noxious fumes in the urban areas although no chemical warfare attack had been launched. They found heroin and Molotov cocktails more immediate threats than the Soviet SS-9. They were ready to seek the funds for their favorite domestic programs in the swollen military budget.

Potential allies for this new constituency could be found within two groups that had been growing increasingly hostile to each other: poor blacks and white workers. The needs of poor blacks were so great that, whatever else was required to meet them, a massive investment of federal funds was a basic ingredient. Yet, apathy among the masses of blacks and disunity among the handful of the organized had so far rendered them largely impotent as a pressure group for change. If blacks began to pull together more effectively for their own interests, however, they might meet more resistance from working-class whites. Disadvantaged by the tax structure, harried by unemployment, convinced that their taxes were spent on welfare recipients rather than on services for hard-working, obedient citizens, white workers constituted one of the most insecure and fearful groups in American society. Nevertheless, a number of unions began to take increasingly outspoken positions against military expenditures and for a large budget to meet human needs.

Whether these unions can carry their memberships with them toward this new stance remains one of the questions of the next decade. White workers form an important part of a tax revolt, which was directed largely against expenditures for education in the late 1960s. In the 1970 elections, a *New York Times* survey of the 50 states found that voters generally rejected state proposals to increase taxes or issue new bonds for education. State officials attributed this resistance to "opposition to new taxes of any kind during an economic slump, disgust with student disorders in both colleges and high schools, opposition to busing and integration, and misgivings about the effectiveness of educational institutions." [10]

Yet, the mix of socioeconomic resentments directed against educational outlays did not seem to extend to other governmental activities. The same survey reported greater generosity toward state proposals to build highways and antipollution and recreational facilities. When added to the fact that 49 percent of those polled by Gallup in 1970 favored cuts in military spending,[11] it would appear that in the future the impulse to cut taxes can move in a variety of directions. Indeed, sufficiently large cuts in military spending could lead *both* to tax reductions and increased spending on civilian programs.

HOW REALISTIC IS IT to assume that the outcome of this political-economic competition is not yet determined by the weight of the military-industrial complex?

While the complex has developed a life of its own, it has not completely escaped the influence of the democratic process. Elected and appointed officials—not some secret, faceless cabal—continue to make decisions about public policies and resources. These officials must choose between new weapons systems and new educational programs, between restrictions on presidential authority to send troops abroad and open-ended commitments, between bailing out Lockheed and writing off a bad investment. Just as men in the executive branch and Congress made decisions in the 1940s and '50s which, in part unwittingly, laid the foundations for the

[10] John Herbers, "Survey Finds Voters Across the Nation Opposed Bonds or Taxes for Education," *New York Times,* November 8, 1970.
[11] *New York Times,* September 24, 1970.

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military-industrial complex, so may men in the executive branch and Congress make decisions more consciously in the 1970s which would help to dismantle it.

Because of the institutionalized momentum of the complex, the task is obviously difficult. Yet, at least during the 1970s, it will not be impossible. The power of the complex explains much, but not all, of the federal government's policies. Citizens, too, share some of the blame for their failure to *sustain* an organized effort to pressure and/or replace the decision-makers in Washington. There have been many valiant ad hoc skirmishes, but there has not yet been a protracted political war. Many of the potential troops for such a struggle seem too discouraged, cynical, or tired to wage it. This weakness of will augments the image of an omnipotent enemy—ironically, at a moment when it is on the defensive for the first time.

A political struggle requires a strategy; any strategy that seeks to reduce the power of the military-industrial complex must be based on the urgency of transferring much of its substance to the civilian sector. The major effort—to be undertaken at a time when many Americans feel an undefined malaise and are ready to examine their collective problems—must be directed at persuading the voters, and through them the Executive branch and Congress, that most of the federal budget should be spent on people rather than on armed forces.

Some structural changes would help, but they are minor. For example, the establishment of a single congressional committee to review all requests for funds would reduce the influence of the all-powerful Armed Services committees and the Defense subcommittees of the Appropriations committees. Yet the national will to shift priorities is infinitely more important than altering this parliamentary procedure. The will to cut the Pentagon's funds means fewer defense contracts, fewer bases, fewer lobbyists, fewer congressional allies. The will to shift funds to domestic programs means that the nation can at last begin to discover whether its problems are susceptible to solution.

Persuasion of the voters should deal with three areas:

(*1*) the concept of national security;

(*2*) the quality of life within the United States;

(*3*) conversion of military production and facilities to civilian uses.

The first requires that a whole series of questions, postponed for a generation, now must enter the public dialogue. What are the vital interests of the United States? How should they be defended? Do more weapons make us more secure? Is the arms race itself a threat to the peace? How much is it worth to society to purchase a specific weapons system, as against expenditures for air pollution facilities, quality education, or national health insurance? These questions will have to be continually posed, and answered, through all available public forums.

The second area requires a more organizational, less intellectual effort. A myriad of voluntary organizations exists in the domains of environment, education, health, housing, and social welfare. They all seek federal funds. Almost invariably, they work separately, with a minimum of allies, in each community. Their success will depend on the forging of an urban-suburban coalition of common interests and an awareness that the tax dollars they seek now go to the military.

Here, the peace groups can play a crucial role as catalysts. Without broadening their mandate to include purely domestic questions, they can "lobby the lobbies" in the domestic field in order to explain where the tax dollars have really gone and to urge creation of human-needs coalitions at the grass roots and in Washington. In short, the peace groups can help persuade the domestic lobbies that they are the joint underdogs in a very tough competition.

Local leadership of an exceptional quality will be needed before the conservationists

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agree to support higher pay for teachers in return for the Education Association's support for a sewage-treatment plant, and before the ghetto leadership agrees to support higher municipal salaries in return for support by the municipal employees of low-cost housing measures. Yet, such exchanges are the stuff of which coalitions are forged.

The third area of mass persuasion, conversion of military production and facilities to civilian uses, requires a sophisticated campaign on behalf of planning by defense contractors and by government at all levels. On the one hand, the defense firms possess skills, equipment, and land which would be invaluable to life-serving programs. On the other hand, the managements that have been nurtured on federal largesse are reluctant to endure the vagaries of the commercial market, while the federal government has been both permissive and overprotective toward its industrial offspring. Under the best of conditions, it may take a firm two years to switch to a different line of work. The big defense managements, however, would rather fight than switch.

As voters and taxpayers demand that the federal government press these firms to prepare themselves for civilian life, a chink is opened in the armor of the military-industrial complex. If the managements move to convert, they wean themselves away from dependence on military contracts. If they do not, the federal government will be obliged during this decade to choose between permanent subsidies for the costly monster it has created or making it shift for itself in the cruel world of free enterprise.

The employees of these firms, however, cannot simply be abandoned as military spending shifts or declines. Federal and state governments will have to finance retraining programs, relocation costs, and extended unemployment benefits for the production workers, engineers, and scientists laid off by the defense companies. In supporting measures to cushion the impact of layoffs on these employees, the unions that represent them find another area of overlapping interest with the peace and new-priorities groups which have promoted conversion planning.

In seeking to generate the kind of sustained pressures on the decision-makers in Washington which can reverse the trend toward militarization, the peace and new-priorities forces must work against a deadline. They do not have forever, nor do they face inevitable defeat. But a combination of an increasingly deadly arms race, the mounting pollution and decay in the megalopolis, and the frustration and despair among many Americans mean that the turn must be made during the 1970s. Unless the nation is demilitarized in the coming decade, its problems may well be insoluble.

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R. J. Krickus

White Working-Class Youth

CONTRARY TO WHAT the news media, academics, and the "cosmopolitan" Left imply, the average American youngster is not doing his thing on a university campus. By 1985, it is estimated, only 14 percent of America's population will be graduates of four-year colleges. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that, in 1968, 65.4 percent of our high school graduates sought employment upon graduating and did not enter college. We are talking about the single largest proportion of our youth, yet in-depth studies of their psychological, social, economic, and political problems are hardly available.

Given the Administration's campaign to wrest working-class votes from the Democrats and the latter's natural inclination to stave off a GOP raid, one would think that adroit operatives in both parties would be uncovering relevant data about this sought-after target. That's not so. Staff people, speech-writers, and researchers in Washington remain in an appalling state of ignorance about working-class youth. I know of a "youth agency" in Health, Education and Welfare that has a three-fold classification of youth in the United States—"black," "Mexican-American," and "college student." Last summer an Office of Education analyst told me that he had nearly completed a study of our nation's educational priorities before realizing he had overlooked the needs of white noncollege youth.

Academia has been turned on by the "counter culture" and campus unrest, but it pays little attention to the life-style of the young factory worker, the political socialization of his co-workers, and the plight of his wife. It is often assumed that these young people have become melded into the American middle class. This is a somewhat generous explanation, since there is convincing evidence that many academics who pander to the fashionable just do not think working-class youth are worthwhile research material.

The mass media's treatment of young workers also reflects the tunnel vision of middle-class America. Coverage is intermittent at best, usually superficial, and always manifests a parochial (class) bias. The truck driver, supermarket clerk, and steel worker's wife are rarely the subject matter of TV documentaries, much less of TV drama. How many movies has Hollywood produced in the last ten years that sympathetically treat the frustrations of working Americans? There is, of course, *Joe*, an abomination that deserves mention only because many otherwise thoughtful people on the Left believe that the stereotyped Joe Curran fairly represents what the American workingman would be like if his "natural instincts" ever rose to the surface of his consciousness. On the rare occasions when working-class youths receive attention (usually as a by-product of investigation into the problems of affluent youngsters), they are depicted as racist, superhawk cultural yahoos. Yet the young men and women who are portrayed in such one-dimensional terms must grapple with the same kinds of problems—"who am I," "how should I spend my life," "is my work meaningful"—which produce alienation among campus youth.

II

IN ONE of the few recent studies of working-class youth, William Simon and John Gagnon write:

> When compared to the most conservative and minimal goals set for contemporary education —except perhaps the dubious goal of insuring reasonably conformist behavior—schools in the

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working-class areas can only be described as undramatic disaster areas.

Journalist-teacher Peter Binzen in his *White Town U.S.A.* found that the performance of his white students in the Kensington area of Philadelphia approached that of black ghetto children. Binzen's findings will not shock even the casual observer of working-class communities where inferior teachers and inadequate facilities characterize the educational system.

Vocational schools often are mere holding areas for problem students. They rarely provide instruction that is pointed to the demands of the student. College preparatory curricula are grossly inadequate. The son of a factory worker with college potential is too often shunted off to industrial school or pushed out to work. True, working-class parents do not encourage academic achievement to the extent true of middle-class families. But in many cases this restrictive outlook is less a sign of anti-intellectualism than a clear insight into the economics of higher education.

No wonder the drop-out rate in working-class school systems is alarmingly high. In the Highlandtown-Canton area of Baltimore one-third of the high school students drop out and in the Mayfield-Murray Hill district of Cleveland the figure is 50 percent. The crisis of urban education is by no means confined to nonwhite communities.

Lacking the educational perspective or experiences that broaden one's social vision, the working-class youngster, as his parents, feels threatened by the changes swirling about him. It is difficult for him to sympathize with dissident behavior.[1] He is inclined to condemn the activities of long-haired youth, student demonstrators, and articulate black activists who, when breaking the rules of the game, seem to receive sympathetic support from the mass media, government, and the educational system. He knows that if *he* violated the laws the college kids break, he would be arrested without much fanfare or discussion about the grievances that led to his antisocial behavior. He is not unfeeling about the plight of the poor and disadvantaged, but he was taught and he believes in the American credo that a man's success or failure depends upon whether or not he is prepared to work hard for what he wants. Unfortunately, this belief deters him from adequately dealing with problems germane to his own well-being.

The alienation of many black youths has been mollified by virtue of the black community's invigorated sense of group identity. Against the backdrop of poverty and racial prejudice, this may not offer much consolation; yet the Negro who shares the workbench with a white youth feels "plugged into" the movement for social change. Like black people of all ages, he derives emotional support from the activities of leaders like Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. But the white working-class youth has no role model to help him reduce his frustration.

III

SINCE THE END of World War II, a myth has evolved that the American worker has become entrenched in middle-class affluence. As of today, the take-home pay of the average factory hand or clerk with three dependents is slightly over $100.00 per week. In the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, the Department of Labor states that $11,236 is needed to maintain a moderate level of living for a family of this size. But as of 1967, 61.7 percent of the white families living in New York City earned $9,000 per year or less. Consumer prices are rising faster than wages. Consequently, the take-home pay of the average salaried worker, in terms of purchasing power, was less in 1969 than it had been in 1968.

The prospects of the young drop-out (600,000 American youngsters drop out of high school every year) and the recent high school graduate may be even more dismal today than a decade ago. Lacking a job record or proper vocational training, young workers encounter serious employment difficulties. This age group is growing in absolute numbers at a time when the supply of jobs for which unskilled youth can qualify is declining.

[1] A growing number of working-class kids smoke pot, wear long hair, and favor hippie-type clothes, but in many cases these kids are as straight as their parents on other matters. Simon and Gagnon found that the single largest group among the youngsters they studied were family-oriented and by and large adopted the worldview of their parents on most issues.

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In the past, workers could feel some security from the knowledge that a more stable or higher paying position was within reach if one stuck it out. But in the 1970s most workers cannot anticipate moving up the job ladder in this fashion. A study of production workers by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan disclosed that two-thirds of the respondents believed they had no prospect of advancing beyond their present jobs.

The Rosow Report documents that at the outset of his work history, the young worker may earn a relatively good salary. But marriage and growing family responsibilities gradually erode his income, and his salary fails to keep pace with his expenditures. Lacking seniority, he is likely to be laid off during economic slowdowns, and this threat has prompted many young workers to leave better-paying positions in industry for municipal jobs as policemen or firemen, which pay less but offer more job security.

Over the long pull, a secure job may be less important than the disappearance of work options that can engender a sense of accomplishment in one's work. A growing number of young workers are dissatisfied with their jobs. Late bloomers who find themselves trapped in dead-end jobs are rarely given a second chance. This may account for the rising incidence of drug abuse in factories, high rates of turn-over, and mounting absenteeism.

Judson Gooding writes, in *Fortune,* that tedious and repetitious jobs have provoked auto workers to sabotage the assembly line. Such outbursts of frustration are not new. Fourteen years ago I worked the "graveyard shift" in a can factory. It was a common practice several times an evening to shut down the endless flow of beer cans. The process was foolproof and simple. A crumpled can or one turned in the wrong direction would ultimately foul up the system. This afforded us a rest. But a respite from our monotonous work was secondary to the keen pleasure we derived from the thought that the boss knew what we were doing, but could not do anything about our protest. Try though I did, I could not induce my co-workers to relate their dissatisfaction to the corporate structure or political system. My failure to get through was not unanticipated, for in my neighborhood (the Clinton Hill area of Newark) socioeconomic problems were deemed a function of one's personal inability to cope, and not as manifestations of a larger social problem.

Today job dissatisfaction is prevalent among workers who have been reared in an era of prosperity and are but dimly aware of the depression. Approximately 21 million Americans between the ages of 15 and 29 are out of school and never graduated from a college. In many industries they are the backbone of the rank and file. Approximately 40 percent of the auto workers are under 35 and in some auto plants 70 percent of the production-line workers are under 30.

These working-class youths comprise a subculture in which affluence is not taken for granted. In the hippie areas of our larger cities numerous free services are made available to estranged middle-class youngsters, yet one does not find these same services in working-class communities where the need is at least as great. The son of a corporation executive who is rewarded with a social disease as a consequence of a weekend fling at a crash pad can go to a free clinic and receive medical attention. Meanwhile, the young gas station attendant who may be cursed by the same affliction must shell out $10 or $15 for a penicillin shot. As usual in our economic system, the workingman subsidizes the rich and well-connected.

The young worker has been bedazzled by the allure of new automobiles and a suburban home filled with luxurious furniture and labor-saving appliances. Much like the black youth who is caught in a racial bind, he is ensnared in a socioeconomic bind. He sees no exit from a life of economic insecurity, boredom, and an income never quite providing him with the resources to acquire those things he wants.

IV

A GROWING NUMBER of young workers seem to be becoming politically restive. They will tell you that government, the major parties, union leadership, management, and the media are insensitive to their needs. George Wallace was the first national political figure to appreciate the depth of their despair and he provided them with a way of mobilizing their discontent and channeling it politically. While most white workers rejected Wallace, his appeal to them was a symptom of their estrangement from our

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mainstream institutions. Outside the South his movement was nourished primarily by young white workers.

In the cities and suburbs where the young workers live, they have good reason to be cynical about government. Owners of modest homes pay a disproportionate share of the taxes, yet their streets, schools, and recreational facilities are in a state of disrepair. Corruption is highly visible, the streets are unsafe, and there is a feeling that "their own" politicians are selling them out. A declining faith in government prevails in the "reformed" cities as well, for as James Q. Wilson has observed, many big city mayors seem more concerned about foundations, urban consultants, and agency chiefs in Washington than about the complaints of their constituents. Many young workers are both resentful of Washington's neglect and fearful of programs they deem prejudicial to their communities.

Lewis Carliner, in a recent workshop devoted to the problems of young workers, found they are concerned about their "civil rights" at work —unfair disciplinary procedures, shift assignments, and overtime duty. They are cynical about management's pronouncements regarding the "public interest," since they often work in filthy surroundings under unsafe conditions.[2] At the same time, they are impatient with their union leaders and the older workers. They want a greater say in decisions affecting life in the plant. Unlike their fathers, promises about future benefits do not silence them. This rising militancy explains wildcat strikes not sanctioned by union officials (work stoppages jumped by 50 percent in the period 1965–1970), dissident caucuses within the union movement, and attempts to break away from present unions altogether.

Nor should we overlook the problems that confront the young workingman in his community. I have traveled widely throughout the urban North in the last year. On my visits to working-class communities, I have found neighborhood organizations springing up where none had existed before. In North Newark, Southeast Baltimore, and Lake County, Indiana, to cite a few examples, working-class whites are forming community organizations as progressive alternatives to right-wing demagogues who have been attempting to exploit the white communities' alienation.[3]

A final word of caution. The most articulate members of the liberal and radical Left often live in a cosmopolitan subculture that is alien to the average workingman. This cultural chasm accounts in part for past neglect of the working class and forms a roadblock to a firm political coalition with lower-middle-class whites. In these circles one still hears talk about crypto-fascists controlling the construction unions and Nazis in hard hats running amok on the streets assaulting students. The implication that all construction workers are bent on suppressing dissent through violence and the tendency to label the workingman a "hard hat" is fashionable in liberal and radical circles alike.[4]

Many working-class Americans, believe that revolutionary elitists are exploiting their privileged position to side-step the rules by which "straights" must abide. Those who apologize

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[2] A presidential commission was formed to study unrest on college campuses after students were tragically killed at Kent State and Jackson State. Some 14,000 workers are killed in industrial accidents every year, yet concerned citizens have not expressed alarm about this appalling statistic.

[3] Having recognized the need for community organization, a caveat is in order. Proponents of community development have made exaggerated claims about citizen power and participation. Working-class whites are in desperate need of neighborhood structures to mobilize power but many, if not most, of our pressing domestic problems—housing, education, employment, medical care, etc.—require a national thrust to extract massive assistance from Washington. This means the construction of a new political coalition of blacks, working-class whites, liberals, students, and Democratic radicals. While it is fashionable to debunk coalitions that smack of the New Deal, a coalition of this kind is the only feasible road to democratic change in the United States in the 1970s.

[4] An example of activists' defining the workingman's problems through a middle-class prism occurred last year in Gary, Indiana. Young environmentalists had decided that pollution was an issue that would spark the interests of workers in that grimy industrial city. Their antipollution campaign, however, prompted the workers to respond with a slogan of their own: "Pollution—love it or leave it." Reassessing their position, the environmentalists gained the interest of the workers when they zeroed in on conditions in the factories—oil-strewn floors, leaking gas, smoke emissions, and so on.

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David Bromwich

Documentary Now

WHETHER ON STAGE OR "LIVE," whatever the exact degree of contrivance, documentaries stake everything on their appeal to reality. The documentary sets out in search of the real world—to show us real lives, to give those lives a sudden and final importance—and what makes Eisenstein (for example) so disappointing is that he never really tries to find it. Instead of the sensitive detail, the caught inflection of a face, there is the grand imposing spectacle filtered through montage. With Eisenstein the documentary serves artifice at one extreme and *Realpolitik* at the other (scrambling to delete all mention of Trotsky from *Ten Days That Shook the World),* though *Realpolitik* may itself be a higher end—dialectically speaking. His pictures all want lurid coloring; they create an objective viewer because of their artificiality, not their truth.

We cannot imagine the documentary film—with its grainy reality, unwinding the truth 24 times a second—in anything except black and white. Yet Eistenstein seems always about to burst those bounds. He would rather be picturesque than grainy, and the splendor of his method is a kind of fake elegance. The sharecropper children in a Walker Evans photograph are tragic in black and white, for they gaze up with terribly and immediately individual faces. No such difficulty attends the creatures of Eisenstein, in the Odessa Steps sequence of *Potemkin,* let us say. Why not have a pink baby in that carriage? This universal infant cries out for solidity of pinkness, and with the perambulator careering down the steps, burdened under the awful weight of history, the poor thing inside cannot even bear the weight of itself. There isn't any life in it.

It is sometimes said, usually with an air of resignation, that Eisenstein was at any rate the greatest director, at least of documentaries. It seems to me that the conviction is just as wrong as the remote "Oh, well," that supports it, and not only because Eisenstein's gifts were at the service of tyrants. We hear a great deal about how the artist rises above the worst of his ideas, but this is not so with Eisenstein. Here, for once, practice conforms to theory. The director must follow out the logic of a set of rules, established so that life should never be discovered by a man with a camera: the pattern of life exists, and has only to be revealed.

Just how far this departs from the one rule of art (which is: personality) we can understand by recalling *Land Without Bread,* Buñuel's great documentary of the '30s. The film is about malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, about the poverty and destitution of Spanish peasants, and the very plainness of the narration makes it all the more stirring. Yet *Land Without Bread* is at once a social document and a distinctly personal one: therein lies its power, and its true revolutionary spirit. One extraordinary scene has a mountain goat treading carefully along a high rocky path, then stumbling, spilling the beehive which was loaded on its back, at last giving in to the endless stings until their poison turns unbearable and it falls down to die. The symbolic force is there, but too directly to need any prodding, and at the same time too subtly to make a political point. For the scene doesn't "convince" us right off: the goat, helpless and tormented, is the people of Spain, and yet the bees erupt with the violence which will free them, and yet . . . it is all the private nightmare of Buñuel. Bourgeois de-

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cadence. The director committed down the line would have known better than to tolerate such nonsense, which adds nothing measurable to our zeal. But that director is a formalist in the bad sense; and by depriving his audience of sight he deprives himself. Buñuel recorded what he knew had to be seen—what was part of life, day by day, under the conditions he meant to protest—and we, the audience, are the richer for it. That is what documentary should mean.

SOME OF THE VARIETY of modern life in America, and much of the flatness and despair, come through to us in the films of Frederick Wiseman, presently the most interesting of American directors. Wiseman has the first great strength of the documentary artist: the life of his films has never been through a filter. Of course, this "open view" is the hardest thing for any director to achieve, but Wiseman was fully in control of perspective, the unobtrusive eye, by the time he made his second film.

His first, *Titicut Follies,* comments on the loving care of a state mental institution, and somewhere in it there is the pallid, bare body of a demented old man, his eyes sinking down into craters and teeth rotting away, waltzing around his private cell in the asylum and looking up, bewildered and imploring, at the camera that reports his antics. At such a moment we feel, not that we have witnessed something that would better have been left unseen, but that this is perhaps too obvious and a dreadful slice of life—"jolting," as the journalists say. Still, the film goes on and our reservations stay reserved.

In another sequence an intelligent and bitter young man, confined at the asylum out of some legal insanity, complains to the state-hired psychologist that he must get out of this place or he will *really* lose his mind. He offers to prove his sanity, to demonstrate that he can think logically, but the psychologist marks down his "rebelliousness" as one more sign of mental instability. Then a group of administrators speak with the man about his "problem," send him out of the room, decide all together that he's still nuts and resolve to treat him coolly; otherwise he might do something irrational. These people, the administrators—they do not impress us as intelligent, or sensitive, in spite of all their veneer of concern. As a group, they build on each other's complacencies. The rebellious inmate speaks with a precision they will never have, but he will be at the institution forever: the finality of his situation is plain, and sickening. And it is real. We know that we have understood the nature of this institution, which is a soft cancerous mesh wired up by the people in authority, those higher and far more dangerous lunatics.

Yet the lingering over horrors in *Titicut Follies* does make for a certain unevenness, a rawness, which has disappeared in *Law and Order.* Wiseman had the rather unattractive idea of following policemen in a midwestern city on their daily round of calls, the routine things: arresting prostitutes, picking up a drunk, bringing a wailing lost child to the station, settling a family dispute that threatened to turn violent. Unattractive, perhaps, but Wiseman was honest enough to learn about his subject, and not to tell his audience what it already thought it knew. *Law and Order* surprises us by being in some part, and with uncommon force, an account of common decency and humanity. Two policemen caught in a mid-day lull, pulling their cars up side by side to trade remarks about the job, salaries, life in general, radiate a peculiar and memorable charm. The den mother of a house of prostitution—a heavy woman with makeup zig-zagging across her face—has a proud, filthy charm about being booked. Near the end of the film, we get treated to a bit of candidate Nixon addressing a campaign rally on the need for law and order, more and better police; and this is ironic, but not because we have been reassured that all policemen are after all "pigs." It is rather that the well-oiled phrases of the politician come nowhere near the kind of human sympathy which these policemen demand.

Always, the administrators turn up at the source of a dry rot that invades the whole system, whatever be the nature of the institution: mental, legal, educational.

High School is Wiseman's masterpiece, and to my mind the finest American film to have appeared in the past few years. Here the official school counselors, again with that impressive show of "concern," have the presumption to warn parents in the presence of their child, "Well, your daughter Mary gets along fine, you

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see, but she is not really intelligent—doesn't have what it takes—if you know what we mean." Male physical education teachers make sly, dirty jokes in their sexual hygiene classes from which girls have been separated out; vice-principal flunkies prowl the hallways in search of a short skirt, a tardy soul; English teachers do "Casey at the Bat," the poetry of Simon and Garfunkel: serious literature.

It is all there, the kids being "prepared for the world." The football helmet, the astronaut's helmet for a specially arranged simulation flight, and so on to Vietnam. One of the graduates of this training ground writes back from the war: he is about to parachute into enemy territory, he cannot be sure that he is right, but he was taught to do it for God and country—yes? The letter is a plea. But the teacher who reads it to the assembled faculty, a woman who took care of the boy in place of the mother he never had, declares that they can now at last be proud of their work—what they have done for this boy. This sort of tragedy —the woman reading the letter, so pathetically devoted, her student in Vietnam so fatally deluded—will disappear as the old ideas grow into decay, even in the secondary schools. In the moment just before that process began, Wiseman caught the tragedy in full flower, and so made tangible something of our collective fate.

DECAY MELLOWS INTO DECADENCE, and much of the current decadence is on exhibition in *Brand X*, a document of and by the "cultural Left." This film is in the most literal sense *about* pubic hair, body odor, spastic behavior, and the unsung glories of animality. Yahoos burp on its soundtrack and defecate in its frames, indicating their grasp of "black humor" in a comical routine about Christ telephoning God from the cross. The political equivalent of this derangement shows up in a film like *Ice*, directed by Robert Kramer and set with a cast of willing bourgeois revolutionaries. *Ice* acts out the fantasy of urban guerrilla warfare in the United States, which should at least be good for a shudder. But alas, the film is *verité* and spontaneous, and boring. People without exceptional gifts cannot afford to work without a script, and so far as the invention of dialogue goes the (non-)actors of *Ice* are worse than run of the mill. The morality peddled by Kramer seemed to be brutal and rather sick, but then I could not sit through the whole thing, despite one or two stretches of unintended rich humor in the so-bad-it's-good variety.

Brand X and *Ice* (both of them fantasy-documentaries) want to be judged outside any normal frame of reference, beyond good and evil, and the same is true of the recent Maysles production *Gimme Shelter*, a film interesting for reasons having nothing to do with worth. *Gimme Shelter* has the look of a tough, highly moralistic portrayal of our diseased sub-culture, after the manner of *Scorpio Rising*. Such efforts —the much praised *Derby*, for another example, which deals with competitive roller skating —are as a rule poor and pretentious, but there is about *Gimme Shelter* an appalling slickness that makes one long for the good old days of the genre. In fact, the Rolling Stones documentary does not belong to this crude but not disreputable type of film, because of a root dishonesty which by now everyone knows. The most compromised of observers, the Maysles brothers were themselves responsible for the disastrous Altamont rock concert which provided the material for their film. They had the bright idea of buying the services of Oakland's Hell's Angels, at a cost of 500 kegs of beer, thus saving considerably on the price of more orthodox keepers of order. This brought about the disaster; the incredulous head-shaking of Mick Jagger (while the directors show him raw footage of the events, film-within-film) will not change a bit of it. Anyhow, the phony moralism hung round a real corruption has nothing to do with the fascination of *Gimme Shelter*, which centers on the corruption itself. Jagger with his burning blue eyes, blank and menacing; the psychotic hollow face of Charlie Watts, having a staring contest with the camera and losing; Melvin Belli's ur-vulgar office, filled with garbage: we remember these things, and they make us feel several kinds of pain. The appeal to reality is quite bare. We are witnessing the battle to death of two groups of derelicts, two armies of inverters: the drug-rock crowd and the chain-fighting crowd. And as a gray, purgatorial dawn opens out to meet the survivors of the concert, we see that with the worst intentions *Gimme Shelter* still manages a kind of success and leaves us—reflective.

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FROM THESE DEPRESSING VISIONS of a culture breaking down, we turn, logically enough, to the films about social reconstruction in the Third World which have lately come down to us of the Advanced Industrial Societies. Saul Landau's *Fidel* is a narrowly imagined portrait of the Cuban leader, a mild (not fatal) case of hero worship that tells us close to nothing about the man and the new order he is creating. Landau went to Cuba expecting to find a lusty revolutionist uncorrupted by power, being followed by happy and obedient multitudes, and not surprisingly he found just what he was looking for. The refugees are shown to be lazy revanchists whose only complaint is that they were expropriated. Enthusiasm abounds; Castro makes jokes and plays baseball with the people. We see a great deal of the "colorful" aspect of Fidel, to which Landau proved himself a ready subscriber: Castro holds up a pineapple, winks at the cameraman and says, "This is propaganda. I'm turning the bruised side away from the camera." The film gives us the Cuban revolution, turning the bruised side away from the camera. It would appear that Landau never got near his hero, since the interviews with him are nowhere very substantial and the last half of the film depends in large measure on the techniques of the poster or brochure. For colorful Fidel the director substitutes the local color of Havana bars, guitar players, and you know the rest. The actual color of *Fidel* is, by the way, without character; it is all bright and bereft of nuance, like television.

This at least cannot be said of *Ramparts of Clay,* the first film of Jean-Louis Bertucelli. Set in the majestic wastes of Tunisia, the film begins with a citation from Fanon, to the effect that life after the revolution must start once more from the bottom, rebuilding stone by stone. The quote is somewhat misleading, considering that *Ramparts of Clay* depicts the life of a primitive village where the revolution never quite made its way. Although the events are taken from a book—hence authentic—the film does nothing to explain those anthropological curiosities to which it is witness, including the village's particular sense of community and the various sorts of ritual that are still performed in it.

To the audience, everything that happens in the village is puzzling: the workers' strike, for instance, which results in a confrontation with the national army. (In the book, this happens when the workers discover that their labor is toward the housing of government functionaries instead of themselves.) The photography dwells on the long, rolling power of its visual space, beautiful and severe mountain landscapes giving way to the desert and the sea. Unfortunately that does not make a film, for Bertucelli has ambitions beyond those of *National Geographic.* The crazy thing about this picture is that hidden inside all the ritual and austerity —so far as we can discern any plot at all— there is the old Hollywood story about the small town girl who wants to get away and dance in the streets. *Ramparts of Clay* comes on glowing with lyricism—"poetry." It lacks certain of the irrelevant luxuries, things like *pace* and *wit.* So for all that he seems full of integrity, Bertucelli finally induces the art-house nod that says, "Yes, this is extremely noble, and now maybe you'll let us sleep?"

No one, I imagine, will be glazed into torpor by Fernando Solanas's *Hour of the Furnaces,* although its four-hour running times does offer a ripe temptation to yawning. As a total ideologist, Solanas uses quotations stridently all through his film—from Sartre, Fanon, Debray and the like—along with quick-flashing slogans as in Godard. Naturally, the title itself is taken from Che Guevara: "Now is the hour of the furnaces, gather round and throw in the bourgeoisie." Something like that. Solanas is, at all events, revolutionary mostly in virtue of his hatred, which is strong and generous and not easily fatigued. His shortest advice to revolutionaries might be Paul Muni's great line in *Scarface:* "Do it yourself, do it first, and keep on doing it." Along the way Solanas warns us (with the authority of Fanon) that in time of revolution, "Every spectator is a coward or a traitor," and such is the terrible power of this film that the audience, spectators one and all, begin to cheer. Lest anyone think that Solanas is literally using his film to torture spectator-traitors, I should add that it was meant to be shown in segments, broken up by discussions of revolutionary tactics.

The analogy drawn between left-wing political movements and religions has always seemed to me rendered, as it were, in bad faith. Yet as one watches *Hour of the Furnaces* confidently

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supplying the most violent solution to every social evil that besets Argentina, it grows hard to avoid that sort of comparison. For what we have here is most certainly a religion, and it is a religion of hate. Wrote Christ-Guevara (and the scripture is duly cited): "For him who chooses revolution, death is not the end. It is a liberation. . . ." Thus, the resurrection. Solanas defies parody because he makes his case precisely in these terms; the haunting death mask of Guevara is driven into us for a full minute on screen, and immediately symbolizes Christ's last divine agony. The director as propagandist may have felt that should appeal to Christians, for the same diplomatic reason that he acknowledges the Peronists as honorable forerunners of the true revolution. That the film is openly anti-church scarcely alters the content of those subliminal currents which it sets flowing. And indeed, it comes out against everything Western, according to Sartre's quite original view that the treasures of the West belong to the wretched of the earth.

It is simple enough to point out the morally repellent aspects of *Hour of the Furnaces,* which are to be criticized by the well-known objection to Fanon: that in the act of murdering another man one dehumanizes oneself. Yet even with this integral flaw—even though, with Eisenstein, it draws strength from its inhumanity—the film has extraordinary force as a social document. Solanas has made his own universe of glaring lights presiding over a trembling urban darkness, and this is the Argentina of *Hour of the Furnaces:* nervous and malignant, shot through with metallic grays and blacks. A child runs alongside a train carrying its bourgeois cargo, raising his eyes and hands, begging for coins, and from the child's prayer we cut to a skyscraper rearing up in the center of Buenos Aires, immense and unattainable. That is an act of genius; and there is also the sort of cleverness Brecht would have admired, as when the social-cultural elite of Argentina are run down with pictures and commentary, with a refrain that goes "Here they are. . . ." Part I of *Hour of the Furnaces* (bearing on history) is the best, Part III (the revolutionary future) the cheapest and least memorable. In the end, it hardly matters whether the statistical facts of the narrative are right or wrong, for the film is a document in the imaginative sense—straightforward and relentless.

IF RAMPARTS OF CLAY SHOWS the characteristic weakness of color in the documentary form—that is, a tendency to dwell on "background" above all else—*One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* comes near to redeeming this element, pointing the way toward a more effective use of it for nonfictional subjects. Strictly speaking, of course, *Ivan Denisovich* is not a documentary, and yet it would be unthinkable without the example of documentaries looming behind it, just as Solzhenitsyn is unthinkable without Hemingway. Casper Wrede's version of the novel (not brilliant but faithful, and that is an achievement) opens with a great blue wheel of light, gradually moving into range and focus to reveal the well lit barrier around the camp. Blue is the dominant color throughout, a clear, drained-out blue that speaks of technological miracles and "the iron in the soul."

Where Solzhenitsyn wrote about a quite specific group of men, the film is caught in infinite spaces and universality, though never in a vulgar way. The novel brings us into the long perspective only in its last lines:

> A day without a cloud. Almost a happy day. There were three thousand six hundred and fifty three days like that in his stretch. From the first clang of the rail to the last clang of the rail.
> Three thousand six hundred and fifty three days. The extra days were for leap years.

And the film ends on these lines also, to wonderful effect. On screen, however, this is continuous with what went before; instead of generalizing, it sums up. The feeling of a greater abstraction (brought around by overhead shots, views of men marching in the distance, etc.) is Wrede's contribution, and to remark the change is only to note a different kind of success.

The prison camp atmosphere of *Ivan Denisovich* recalls Milos Jansco's *The Round-up,* and it must be said that Wrede's film suffers in the comparison. Jansco is the master of a flat, irrational world, a plateau of Eastern Europe oddly dotted with human beings whose fate it is to be traduced hour by hour, moving painfully in and out of their detention cells. His film has a strength of image that *Ivan Deniso-*

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vich lacks—but that should not make us ungrateful. The chief fault of *Ivan Denisovich* is its screenplay, which is transposed almost directly from the novel and doesn't know just how to make sense of things for the screen. Ivan Denisovich finds a bit of hacksaw blade on the ground and puts it in his pocket: in the book we know that he did this for no special reason, in the film the gesture seems laden with significance and we wonder why. Yet such difficulties (repeated here and there) are small enough. Tom Courtenay was last seen in *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,* a botched bit of social realism with one striking episode (the Borstal boys singing "Bring me my bow of burning gold" while one of their kind gets pummelled for running away), and in this film he comes into his own. He looks intelligent and sad, keeping off the trite "bitter" expression which is stock in trade for realistic actors; when he chews the grass cereal that is "tasteless, hot or cold," he makes the stuff seem ordinary and awful. The comments on his situation are obvious at times—at a change of working hours, "Do you mean to say, the government can even tell the sun what to do?" —but often much better than that. "Have you heard? There'll be no Sunday next week." The best line comes straight from Solzhenitsyn, after Ivan Denisovich has asked to be laid off for illness and a young functionary has denied the request: "How can you expect somebody who is warm to understand somebody who is cold?"

Midway through *Ivan Denisovich,* there is a conversation about Eisenstein which bears very nicely on the problem at hand. A prisoner named Tsezar asks his friend X 123 to admit the magnificence of *Ivan the Terrible*—"The dance of Ivan's guards, the masked *oprichniki,* the scene in the cathedral!" X 123 replies that this is all ham, "so arty there's no art left in it, spice and poppyseed instead of everyday bread and butter," and adds that if the prisoners could get some of the meat horribly infested with maggots in *Potemkin,* they would all be glad enough. The point of this should be clear: the art beyond life at last holds out nothing but artifice. With documentaries, our hope lies in the everyday bread and butter, the fact newly found out and observed, seen with an open eye.

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Gerald Graff

Reason and Its Enemies

THE PASSING OF THE MODERN AGE, by John Lukacs. New York: Harper & Row. 222 pp. $7.95.

THE OBSOLESCENCE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION is now widely alleged, and the publication of John Lukacs's book gives occasion for some reflection on this subject.

By "the passing of the modern age" Lukacs means the passing of the age of the bourgeoisie, whose dominance he sees as having expired some two decades ago with the triumph of technocratic and bureaucratic society in the West. The values of bourgeois civilization, according to Lukacs, started to take hold at the beginning of the 16th century, reached their culmination in the European *haute bourgeoisie* of the first half of the 19th century, and since then have steadily declined, although only recently has the total eclipse of these values become general. Lukacs argues that for all its conformity, snobbery, and class selfishness, bourgeois civilization at its best incorporated the higher values of the classical and aristocratic social orders it had superseded—the passion for rationality, justice, and order, the respect for discipline and self-knowledge. Ironically, the lapse of confidence in bourgeois values was in large part the result of the force of bourgeois self-criticism.

In his analysis of the decline of the bourgeoisie, Lukacs draws upon a tradition of European social thought extending back to Tocqueville and Burckhardt and including Ortega y Gasset, Jan Huizinga, and the contemporary theorist Jacques Ellul. Lukacs restates some of the main points of their diagnosis, a diagnosis given classical formulation by Ortega in *The Revolt of the Masses* (1930). Ortega saw that an unprecedented social aimlessness was in the process of displacing traditional bourgeois aspirations; that the advent of liberal democracy was fundamentally altering the character of the social problem; that the main problem was no longer the denial of economic and political mobility to some groups but the spiritual emptiness of the whole of society, its lack of any collectively shared purpose that could give meaning to the life of the individual and make genuine authority possible.

In a series of densely packed chapters, Lukacs enumerates the aspects of institutional demoralization which, since Ortega wrote, have occasioned an even more extensive withdrawal of mass confidence from governments, economies, schools and universities, churches, the sciences, arts and letters, and social and sexual relations. Huizinga had noted the bewilderingly "antinomic and ambivalent" character of 20th-century reality, in which "the mind finds itself as it were suspended between two opposites," and Lukacs's chapter titles suggest this sense of paradox:

- How the rule of democracy made people feel powerless and weak;
- How the greatest states, having accumulated unequaled powers, suddenly have found that they are becoming powerless;
- How the impermanence of goods has rendered their possession unsatisfactory;
- How, at a time when education has be-

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come universal, people are discovering that their schools are teaching little or nothing; • How, at the time when civilization has become most widespread, people have found that their aspirations are woefully empty.

Such statements define the contradiction that has invaded virtually all contemporary institutions: never have they seemed so oppressive, yet never have they so lacked confidence in themselves or experienced so acute a sense of their impotence—in fact, their oppressiveness may almost be said to be a reflection of their impotence. Despite its unprecedented power to coerce, contemporary authority is pathetically weak in its ability to provide a compelling moral and philosophical justification for its existence.

That the crises which have overtaken institutions are often attributed to exclusively material causes, particularly to the unequal distribution of wealth and power, is itself for Lukacs a prime symptom of contemporary spiritual poverty. "We are threatened not by the absence of justice," he writes, "we are threatened by the fantastic prevalence of untruth." Without denying the enormity of social and political injustice in our age or the need for action to remedy it, Lukacs goes well beyond this to the deeper problems of boredom and loneliness, which cannot be understood or remedied simply in material terms. Yet Lukacs refrains from joining his voice to the call for psychic liberation sounded by the so-called "Freudian Left" and numerous other "cultural revolutionaries," whose diagnoses, though he does not take them up, he would doubtless see as beside the point. The mistake, Lukacs implies, is to think that what we want most is liberation, when what we really want, or need, is a sense of meaning and justification that would give liberation a measure of dignity.

Applying these ideas to the turmoil on university campuses, Lukacs rejects the conservative view that sees no more in the disorders than "the indiscipline and the arrogance of a generation that no longer wants to learn anything," as well as the leftist celebration of such events as challenges to repressive authority. He writes, "I believe, on the contrary, that the young are engaged in a desperate search—not very intelligently, or even consciously, to be sure—for some kind of authority; and that their indiscipline and arrogance are but the reverse sides of their insecurity and fear." The pessimists are correct in viewing the present crisis as a sign of "the dissolution of learning," but Lukacs assigns the primary responsibility for this dissolution to professors and intellectuals in all disciplines who, on one level, have dismembered the world of knowledge by cutting it up into unrelated specializations and, on another level, have responded all too readily to the thirst for facile syntheses.

THERE IS NO SHORTAGE at the moment of publications proclaiming the end of the bourgeois age and the advent of Postmodernism, the New Sensibility, the Revolt of the Body, and a variety of Breakthroughs—cultural, psychological, or psychedelic. One respect in which Lukacs's work differs from most of this fashionably apocalyptic writing lies in the distinction he makes between bourgeois civilization and the essentially antibourgeois technocracy that has displaced it. Lukacs argues that despite its roots in the older bourgeois concept of rationality, the social pattern which has recently emerged, marked as it is by social engineering, technical "problem-solving," permissiveness in morals, and faith in management, bureaucracy, and administration, is radically alien to the moral traditions of bourgeois humanism. In this Lukacs is surely correct. Such radical critics as Susan Sontag only confuse matters when they condemn "the damage that Western 'Faustian' man, with his idealism, his magnificent art, his sense of intellectual adventure, his world-devouring energies for conquest, has already done, and further threatens to do." Despite the justice of this by-now-familiar indictment of Western "Faustian" man, the argument ignores the tradition of rational self-criticism of which *Faust* itself is a prime expression and it overlooks the fact that the barbaric and merely functional "rationality" admired by motivational researchers, systems analysts, and missile technologists is a travesty of this tradition. Oddly anachronistic in this respect, current radicals continue to undermine patrician standards already woefully weak in order to achieve a liberation from constraints that lost their effective strength long ago.

A second respect in which Lukacs's argument differs from many contemporary analyses of

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these issues lies in the distinction he recognizes between those bourgeois values that do reflect narrow class interests and those having more broadly human applications. Though Lukacs is not a radical, his position on this point coincides with the older traditions of radicalism, which favored the preservation of those elements of bourgeois culture that represented universal human aspirations. By contrast, current radicals who reject the whole of this culture as a product of an inhuman rationalism or an ideological instrument of class exploitation or elitism are turning their backs on their radical origins as well. They fail to consider that many of the "bourgeois values" embodied in the more significant forms of our culture are not exclusively or necessarily tied to any social class but are part of a more general human inheritance.

In thus cutting themselves off from cultural traditions which had given intellectual and moral substance to the earlier radical critique of society—and which could vitalize contemporary radicalism—such radicals have no choice but to promote romantic, irrationalistic, and primitivistic alternatives. Unhindered by such a framework, Lukacs envisions a future in which the higher achievements of the bourgeoisie have a legitimate place. Conceding the justice of attacks on the bourgeoisie as a class, Lukacs argues that the reflective, introspective, historically conscious mode of thought which reached its highest development in the bourgeois age is durable enough to outlast the passing of this age. Though resigned to the termination of bourgeois culture as such, Lukacs finds reason to hope that through progressive extension of historical consciousness, itself the chief legacy of the bourgeoisie, some of the ethical and intellectual achievements of the defunct civilization will survive the present upheavals and fertilize the society of the future, whatever form it should assume.

Lukacs's claims for historical consciousness as a potential force of continuity against the drift of cultural disintegration, though they are largely reasonable, represent perhaps the most vulnerable feature of his book. The theory of historical consciousness (about which Lukacs has written an earlier study) entails not merely a vindication of the sense of the past and the values of tradition; the theory further holds that values, traditions, and the sense of the past itself are "historical," i.e., temporary and variable constructions superimposed by the subjectivity of each epoch and lacking any permanent foundation in human nature or the nature of things. To define values as historical *in this sense* is to concede their arbitrariness, thus draining them of the authority necessary to satisfy the modern need for a self-transcending purpose. The theory of historical consciousness, by presupposing the temporal and subjective character of the values it would preserve, takes away with one hand what it bestows with the other.

This contradiction weakens Lukacs's attack on materialistic philosophies, which he holds largely accountable for undermining the traditions of autonomous rationality and moral seriousness. Like numerous opponents of determinism and positivism in this century, Ortega among them, Lukacs succumbs to a corresponding overemphasis on the subjective origins of knowledge, arguing that objectivity is "an invention of the human mind," i.e., no more than a regularized form of subjectivity. Such a move tends in turn to subvert the authority of cultural standards, and it aligns Lukacs unwittingly with such apologists for counter-culture subjectivism as Theodore Roszak, who asserts that "objective consciousness . . . like a mythology . . . is an arbitrary construct in which a given society in a given historical situation has invested its sense of meaningfulness and value." In reacting against the positivist's separation of the knower from the object, which results in a divorce of science from morality, those modern thinkers who have reduced objectivity to the status of myth do not notice that in doing so they deny the accessibility of truth. If the positivist model of neutral, value-free objectivity rationalizes the immoral use of scientific achievements, the counterview that objectivity is a mere historical myth implies a relativism no less congenial to the demands of power.

Lukacs deplores the "primitivism," contempt for standards of craftsmanship, and abdication of moral authority, which have resulted in "the senselessness of the arts" and "the meaninglessness of letters." But he then turns and praises Symbolist poets and Impressionist painters for

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recognizing "that an objective representation of reality was impossible, that external reality was to a great measure formed from the inside of the viewer, that the object of his observation was not independent of the observer." But it was this belief in the impossibility of objectivity, when carried to its logical conclusions, which helped bring about the senselessness and meaninglessness in the arts that Lukacs condemns. It is possibly no coincidence that Ortega, too, in his writings on the dehumanization of art, provided a rationale for an antirealist esthetic, antithetical to the standards of culture and learning Ortega elsewhere defended. The apparent incompatibility of esthetic modernism with traditional humanistic cultural standards is a problem that contemporary humanists have been reluctant to face but can no longer avoid.

For all the brilliance of its analysis, *The Passing of the Modern Age* itself reflects many of the unresolved conflicts in recent humanistic thought. Can allegiance to the historical mode of thinking be reconciled with a dedication to traditional values of culture? Can the assumption of the historical and subjective nature of truth be squared with the search for values capable of compelling general conviction and giving content to authority and to social relations? As long as it remains ambivalent toward these issues, the humanistic alternative to the technocratic anticulture and the irrationalistic counter culture is seriously weakened. If, as seems to me likely, this dilemma proves unresolvable within the framework of the theory of historical consciousness, then there may eventually be no choice but to reopen the question of the possibility of transhistorical values. If, as Lukacs suggests, some values persist after the social and material matrix that gave rise to them has passed away, perhaps this indicates that these values can be claimed as permanent norms of experience.

But these are hard problems, and since it is difficult to think of many modern thinkers who have dealt successfully with them, it would be unfair to dwell on Lukacs's failure to do so. This failure, moreover, should not destroy one's respect for his positive achievement in advancing the discussion of the contemporary predicament well beyond conventionally received ideas.

Derek A. Kelly

On Participation

PARTICIPATION AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY, by Carole Pateman. New York: Cambridge University Press. 122 pp. $4.95.

THIS BOOK MAY INITIATE an effort to formulate and gather the evidence in support of "participatory democracy" as its advocates confront contemporary democratic theorists. Miss Pateman presents a study in six chapters. Two criticize what she calls the "contemporary theory of democracy" (from Schumpeter through Berelson, Dahl, Sartori, Eckstein, and others) by considering the role of participation in the theories of Rousseau, Mill, and Cole —seen by Schumpeter as proponents of an irrational theory of democracy. Four other chapters present empirical evidence of the viability of participatory democracy, particularly in industry, drawn mainly from Great Britain and Yugoslavia. Pateman believes that the issue of the applicability of participatory democracy—in industry and elsewhere—is a live and pressing question in our day, indeed for any society seeking to be humanistic.

This book does not go very far into the argument, but it does a service by presenting a clear outline of the arguments for and against both versions of democracy and of the empirical studies to be undertaken if the contemporary theory of democracy is to be shown to be faulty and the claims of participatory democracy to be verified.

Pateman holds that the essence of true democracy is the full participation of every member of a society in the tasks and decisions of the polity, of every association, national or local. She accordingly condemns contemporary democratic theory as elitist and even antidemocratic. Pateman then outlines the arguments for participatory democracy as given by Rousseau, Mill, and Cole and in the concluding chapter intimates her own view. "The contemporary theory of democracy represents a considerable failure of the political and sociological imagination on the part of recent theorists of democracy." Even though her evidence in support of participatory democracy is in-

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conclusive and leaves us with an open question, perhaps it also has more content and more empirical support than even its radical advocates would have thought several years ago.

This reviewer was struck by the clarity and simplicity of Pateman's reasoning; but the search for a convincing and reassuring argument was to be inconclusive—only the skeleton is here. Beyond a fine examination of contemporary democratic theory and an equally good development of the conceptual and empirical aspects of participation, she has given us little detailed analysis of the implications and deficiencies of the data she presents. Her modest outline suggests more is yet to be done if the position is to convince—as an empirical possibility for human governance. A participatory democrat must ask himself how far he can meet and how far he can resist the counter-evidence while still adhering to his position.

PATEMAN'S EXAMINATION of participatory democracy is dual in character. She wants to consider and gives support to its hypothesis that participation has an educative function to perform, and she wants to show that participation *is* applicable to industry—thinkers such as Eckstein notwithstanding. Her consideration of the conceptual aspects of Rousseau's, Mill's, and Cole's theory of participation is meant to support the first hypothesis; her attention to the worker's participation in industrial decisions in Yugoslavia and elsewhere is meant to support the second.

From this point of view, however, her analysis of Mill as an advocate of participation in government and elsewhere seems mistaken in light of some recent evidence to the contrary. Similarly, her stated but unargued opposition to Isaiah Berlin's strictures against Rousseau in *Two Concepts of Liberty* is not convincing. Finally, her simplification of the issue of depoliticalization resulting from the ordinary man's inability to understand, much less discuss, the means and ends of high technology—a problem highlighted most recently by Jurgen Habermas—seems questionable. Doubtless a writer must be judicious as to the extent of his investigations, but a philosopher who merely sketches an argument, particularly one involving ambiguous empirical data, may be said to have lost his way in the social world. We may be justified in regarding Pateman's reluctance to amplify her points as evidence that participatory democracy has not yet come of age as a viable alternative to the present democratic system.

One of the important considerations for advocates of participatory democracy is the development of a theory of authority. The essential point seems to be that it requires that authority be individuated by each and every citizen—as Rousseau, for instance, argued. Yet Pateman seems to confuse here the holding of authority with the legitimacy of authority—and her identification of the two shunts aside the problem of the role of leadership in an applicable theory of participation. Nor does she consider the application of participatory democracy to the extraindustrial spheres of life and particularly to higher education—from where the cry first arose—except for a cursory sentence or two. Nor, further, does she do more than mention the problem of making clear the nature of the "needs" men have which are to be met by the act of participation.

WHITE WORKING-CLASS YOUTH (continued from page 506)

for the excesses of the student revolutionaries and the Panthers contribute to the stereotypes by which workers see radicals as subversives and liberals as hostile to the working-class American. The double standard that treats the alienation of middle-class youth sympathetically and denies the plight of the young worker promotes such stereotyping.

We are asked to understand college dissidents, to sympathize with their problems, and to make an effort to communicate with them. We should. But the same kind of compassion and indulgence must be directed at the bulk of our noncollege youngsters, for they too have legitimate problems. We cannot hope to eliminate poverty, racism, urban blight, and defense spending beyond our security requirements unless we gain rapport with those youngsters who drive trucks, clerk in department stores, and pump gas.

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LETTERS

On the Confession

Editor:

It seems to me that Erazim Kohák's article on *The Confession* [April DISSENT] missed the point of the film and does a grave disservice to the search for truth. He does state the real point of the Slánský trials, "that men who destroy the safeguards of human freedom, even when they do it with the best of intentions, that Virtue might triumph over Vice, become defenseless in face of the very power they created." That is the point which is made in Artur London's book, and also, though more forcefully, the point made by the film. (Who can forget the episode showing London and his friends voting *for* support of the Rajk trial and condemnation?)

What, then, are Kohák's complaints? That the scenes are not taken in Prague, and the coins "Gerard" pulls out of his pocket did not go into circulation until several months later. But then he answers his own reproaches: it was supposed to be filmed in Prague, "but then the tanks rolled again." So, Kohák "deepens" his complaints. *The Confession* fails as parable because "a parable must tell the reader what it was all about," and this, he argues, the film doesn't do.

No film has ever been made about the Communist trials, till this one, that even tried to show what it was all about. This one shows what happened, *"wie es eigentlich gewesen ist."* The shortcoming of the film, which Kohák doesn't even discuss, is a more fundamental one; it flows inexorably from the fact that London remained a Communist, albeit, a "revisionist" Communist, critical of Stalinism and its awful works. To the man in the street this might make the film incredible; but, in the last analysis, this is also why it is so truthful; it tells how it happened, not how a great artist might try to explain a bizarre, incongruous, unbelievable chapter in history.

An important contribution of this film to the search for truth is that it provides an answer to the question, asked and answered, asked and answered, but never to full satisfaction—why did they confess? They were tortured; and though that's not the whole story, that's the main reason why they confessed.

Kohák makes other complaints. The film only hints vaguely, he charges, that many of the defendants were veterans of the Spanish Civil War. The film, and the book, don't *hint* this at all; they *tell* it, and one of the most terrible accusations of *The Confession* is that the Communists undertook even greater persecution of the veterans of the war against Franco than Hitler had conducted. Kohák complains that the film "notes, much too briefly, the crude anti-Semitism of the trials." Did we see the same film? Possibly the most dramatic moment in the courtroom scene is when the prosecutor reads out the nationality of each defendant; and for most of them it is *Jew*. Again and again the word rings out as an accusation in the courtroom. And then there is the Czech-jailer-Communist spitting out the view to London that Hitler should have finished the job of exterminating the Jews. How much more explicit can you be?

Kohák says he is doubtful that the film was useful in France and other places where it was shown. From all indications it created a crisis for many French Communists because, among other things the film shows what an ignominious role was played by the French Communists in supporting the Slánský trials, up to the point where the French Communist wife of London wrote to Gottwald and praised him for prosecuting her husband! The Communists in Chile sought, with apparent success, to prevent the showing of *The Confession* because it is such a searing condemnation of Communist totalitarianism.

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of Kohák's article is that it misses another aspect of the film and its impact, namely, that there are many thousands of Artur Londons all over the world. In our own country there are several hundred thousand men and women who have gone through the ranks of the CP, who have accepted the indictment of Stalin as the world's biggest mass murderer since Caligula and who still feel that Communism, either in its Russian or Cuban or Chinese variant, is both viable and good. If for no other reason, this is a truthful film because it tells the story of these people—incredible people without doubt—but this is what they are and they include some of the greatest actors in the world, including many who perform so magnificently in *The Confession*.

JOSEPH CLARK □

ERAZIM KOHÁK *replies:*

I welcome Joe Clark's comments on my review because, in one way, he is utterly right. I did do injustice to the film, vastly underestimating its significance and impact. The film does show graphically and accurately *what happened*. But then, I did not question that. I emphasized that the film does tell what I called the "small truth." My error was in assuming that since the XXth Congress the world has become sufficiently aware of the *what* of Stalinism. I failed to appreciate the vast difference between an abstract awareness of "deformations of socialist legality" and a concrete confrontation with the merciless reality of it in human suffering. The Party—and the thousands of Arthur Londons of whom Clark speaks—might be able to live with a theoretical admission of "deformations of socialist legality" and keep the

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faith. It is the presentation of that theoretical admission in terms of concrete experience, in London's book and film, in Solzhenitsyn's *One Day,* in Brodsky's *Solution Gamma,* that shakes the faith to the core. This is why the Prague press unleashed a barrage against London, why the Chilean Communists banned the film, why even trusted Soviet officials abroad were forbidden to see it. The "small truth" may be small as theory—it is overwhelming as experience. Here Clark is entirely right; I was wrong and owe an apology to Costa-Gavras and London.

But Clark's objections do not speak to my central criticism—that the film tells *what* happened, not *why* it happened. Clark agrees that I state the main point of the trials correctly. No one who lived through the revolutionary cycle can escape the awareness that the "deformations of socialist legality" were no accident, but the inevitable result of the destruction of human freedom in the name of a revolutionary ideal. Unfortunately, this awareness is inseparable from the awareness of guilt shared in spite of purest intentions. For that reason, we prefer not to speak about it. Understandably—but this is why the new true believers can perpetuate the illusion that it was all an accident, that next time it will be different, that we have to try the same revolution again and again.

I think we have an obligation to face up to that awareness, and draw the consequence: that it can never be different, that the revolutionary rule of the Righteous cannot, in principle, realize the socialist ideal. I do not think *The Confession* faces up to that. It makes mercilessly clear what happened—and I was wrong to speak of that as the "small" truth. But it does not say why it happened; *that it happened necessarily,* not as a fortuitous deformation of the revolution, but as its inevitable result. Each time I hear young people speak of *The Confession* as an argument for a new "people's dictatorship" *à la* Mao I cannot help feeling that in this case, the film's omission is a lie. □

Unions

Editor:

In the August 1971 issue of DISSENT, Brendan and Pat Sexton quote me, citing the *New York Times,* as saying: "The degree of corruption in labor has been incredible. . . . The labor movement has stagnated. . . ." etc. etc.

As I wrote to the *Times* (which did not print my letter) and to *New America* (which did, after it had used the same *Times* quote), I had been describing to their reporter the reasons why I had stopped writing about labor *13 years ago!* And that I had not kept up with developments in the trade union movement in any substantial way since.

I would still stand by my remarks as relevant to the character of the trade union movement, circa 1955–60; whether they still hold I do not know. In any event, I regret that the Sextons, unwittingly, attributed to me sentiments about the *present* which I do not hold. DANIEL BELL □

On Imperialism

Editor:

In defense of a criticism of his article "The Problem of Imperialism" Henry Pachter made the following reply in DISSENT (April 1971): "U.S. investments in Canada mounted to $18.1 billion, Canadian investment in the U.S. to $2.6 billion. Canada has about one-tenth the U.S. population; the figures, therefore, are not astonishing. . . ."

I did not read Mr. Pachter's original article, but I question the insight and relevance of an article on imperialism by anyone who believes that it is "not astonishing" that foreigners (U.S. citizens) own 46 percent, 62 percent and 52 percent of key economic sectors of another nation (Canada) because one nation has 10 times the population of another. According to this population-basis-for-foreign-ownership thesis, it would be equally acceptable and unastonishing if the U.S. owned most of the rest of the world since it has the fourth-largest national population.

The illogic of Mr. Pachter's unconscious acceptance of Pax Americana is revealed when applied to the other high-population nations. For example, since India has twice the population of the U.S. should India own twice as much Canadian industry as the U.S.? Should China, therefore, own even a bigger portion of Canadian industry than India? Moreover, is it equally astonishing that India and China do not own their proportionate shares (that is, most) of the U.S. economy?

After reading Mr. Pachter's defense of his article on imperialism, I was not stimulated to find the earlier issue of DISSENT in which the full article appeared.

WILLIAM H. MOYER

HENRY PACHTER *replies:*

We should expand our letter column. People who won't read articles even if they were paid to do it, still read letters. I wrote a long essay in which I made several proposals to deal with imperialism. I am still waiting to receive a response to my proposals. But I have received a letter on a footnote and a letter on the letter. So I conclude that, perhaps, it might be a good idea to repeat my proposals in the letter column. I proposed: to give the assets of American corporations to the countries where they operate; to form worldwide cartels for the trade in the great international commodities; to create international corporations to run the production and distribution of some basic raw materials; common market agreements for Latin America and Africa. I shall not mention the other proposals, hoping that Mr. Moyer will now read the original article.

To prove the need for my proposals I had quoted certain statistics, showing in at least three different places that something like 18 billion U.S. dollars is invested in Canada. But in one footnote I made the distinction, which seems important to me, that in some countries American investment affects

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the political and economic development unfavorably, whereas other countries, such as Canada, Brazil, and now Chile, exercise complete sovereignty over their political fate (or as much sovereignty as any country can hope to enjoy in an age of world communications) and also can direct the flow of investment capital. I can now bolster that point by quoting Mr. Allende, who favors very much the further investment of U.S. capital in Chile even while nationalizing the big copper mines.

Promptly I received a letter, not on my article but on the footnote, and not on what the footnote says but on my failure to consider Canada's plight. To make this point, the letter writer quotes—what? The same statistics I used elsewhere in my article. OK, patiently I explain to the letter writer that what matters is not the nationality of the investor but the *way* the investments are used. In a jocular mood, I suggest that on the average, U.S. citizens do not invest more in Canada than Canadians do in the U.S. and that Anglo-Saxon Canadians invest more in Quebec than French Canadians do outside Quebec.

Nationalist griping about who owns what leads to nothing. It does not matter whether the capital one uses in building up or modernizing a country is black or white or yellow; whether it speaks English, French, or Russian (I sincerely regret that I cannot add: or Spanish, since capital is fleeing from Spanish-speaking countries, and the first task of Latin-American governments should be, not to stop the inflow of American capital, but to stop the outflow of national capital). What matters is whether this capital is invested for private exploitative or for public productive purposes, for development or without regard of the consequences. And further: in attacking the ills of foreign investment, what matters is not to quote lamentable statistics but to ask specific questions and to analyze specific situations: is the investment being used for purposes of *political* domination (I spent a lot of space to discuss this in my article)? Are the immediate advantages of rapid industrialization outweighed by the long-term burdens of amortization, and if so, are there better ways of financing the "take-off"? Is the government and that means, the social structure of the receiving country, strong enough to use and direct foreign investments? (A case in point is much-maligned India).

To Our Contributors

In sending manuscripts, letters, and other material, please do not use special delivery unless requested. Regular mail will, as a rule, be adequate and more convenient.

And be sure to keep a carbon of all manuscripts.

In the article Mr. Moyers has not read I tried to show that imperialism is a political force which occasionally uses economic means. I suggested that it might be easier to neutralize the latter than to defuse the former. One of the reasons this is so apparently stems from the obsession of the anti-imperialists with nationalism, provincialism, ethnocentrism, inverted racism, and other forms of chauvinism. Poor old Marx thought that by invading new markets capital was "revolutionizing" undeveloped countries; more than a hundred years later the same people whom he then declared obsolete still are fighting the foreign s-o-b's instead of their own s-o-b's. It is their privilege to crave the substitution of the ones for the others, as it is their privilege to make pronouncements on articles they do not read. However, for those interested in the matter I recommend the September 1970 issue of DISSENT, and, for the opposite point of view, an article by Miles Wolfin in the Spring 1971 issue of *Polity*. □

A Correction

Editor:

The word "Unorthodox" in the title of my article, "The Population Problem: An Unorthdox View," in the August issue, was added without my knowledge. I do not wish to appear to lay claim to a bold unorthodoxy to which I am not entitled. Except for a few speculative conjectures, my views on American population trends do not differ greatly from those of most contemporary demographers. They are "unorthodox" only with reference to the alarmist rhetoric of proselytizers for instant zero growth, who are for the most part not social scientists and who show little familiarity with the work of demographers.

There is also a typographical error, for which I myself am responsible, on p. 362: the latest Census Bureau projections show the United States reaching a population of 300 million by the year 2010, *not "2110."*

DENNIS H. WRONG □

Kind Word

Editor:

For what it is worth, I am writing to tell you that I felt the June 1971 issue of DISSENT was one of the finest issues you have ever put together.

The articles by Gordon Zahn, Michael Harrington, Norman Gall, and Jesse Pitts were particularly excellent—a credit to the ideals of socialism and democracy.

Although I have been familiar with DISSENT for the past five years, only recently did I enter a subscription. Issues like the June 1971 issue make me glad I did.

Keep up the good work.

MARK W. WEBER □

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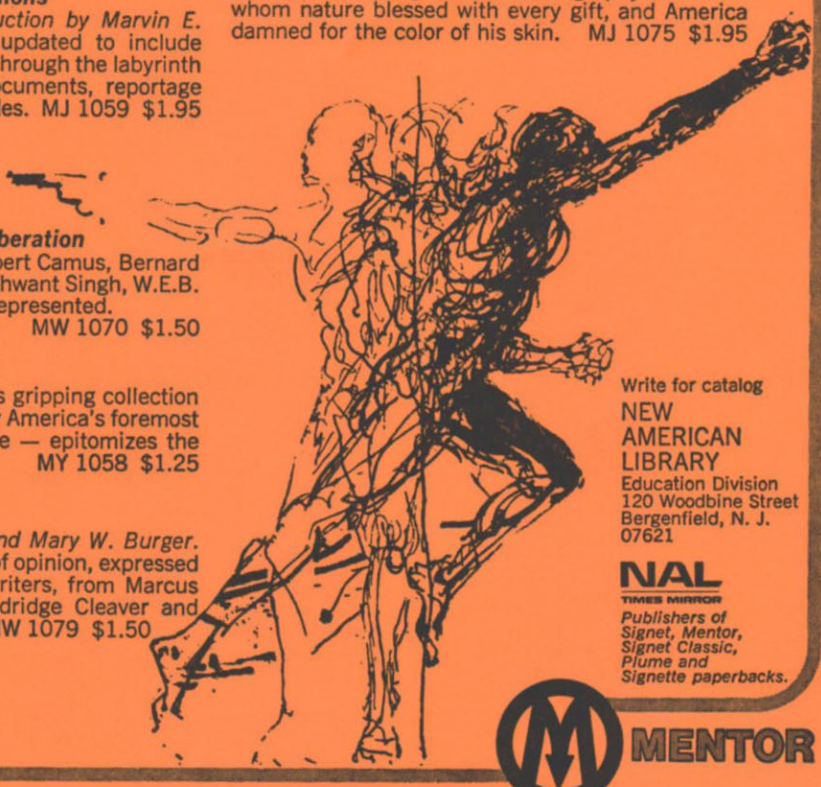

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